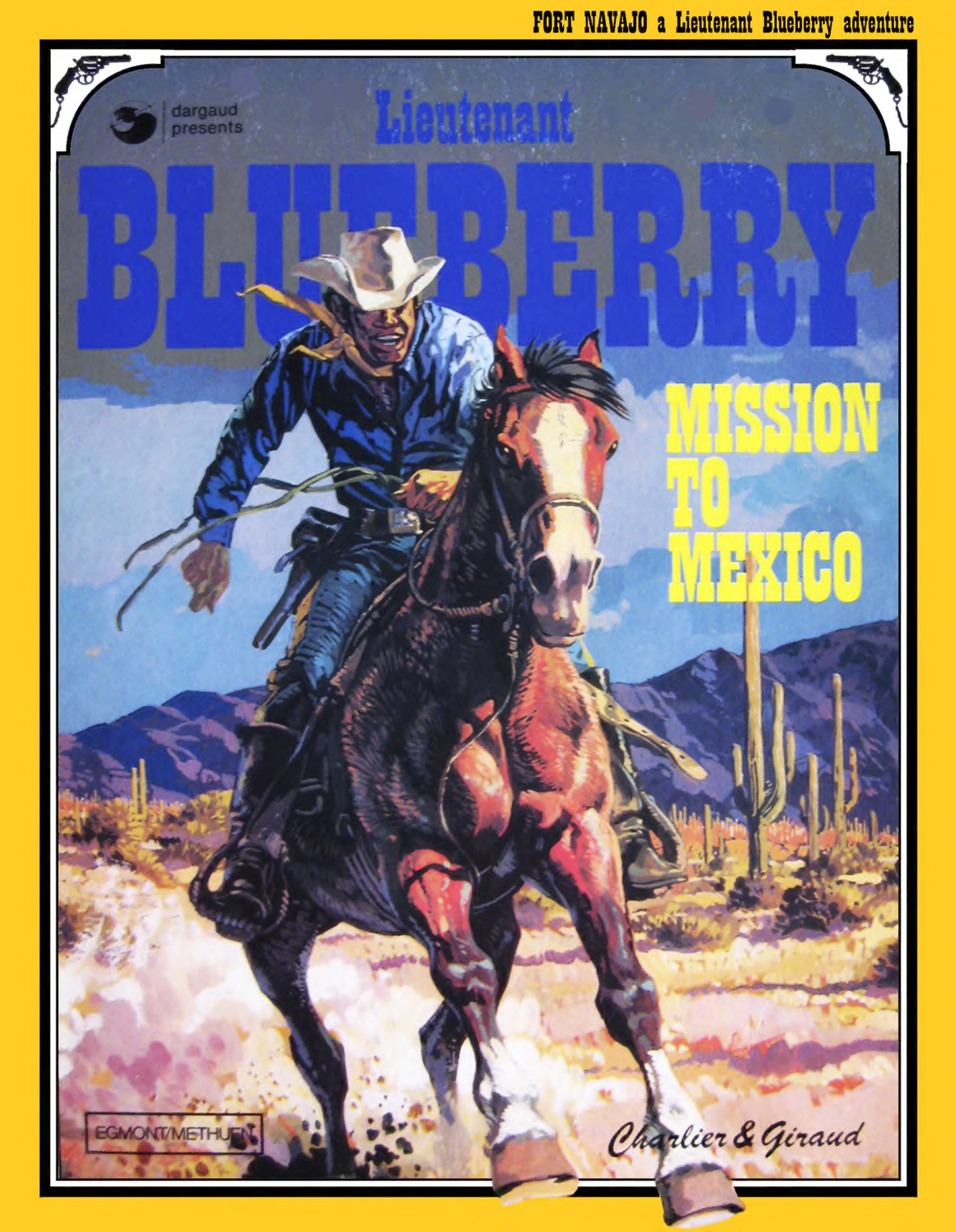
FORT NAVAJO a Lieutenant Blueberry adventure



Charlier & Giraud

Lieutenant BLUEBERRY

MISSION TO MEXICO

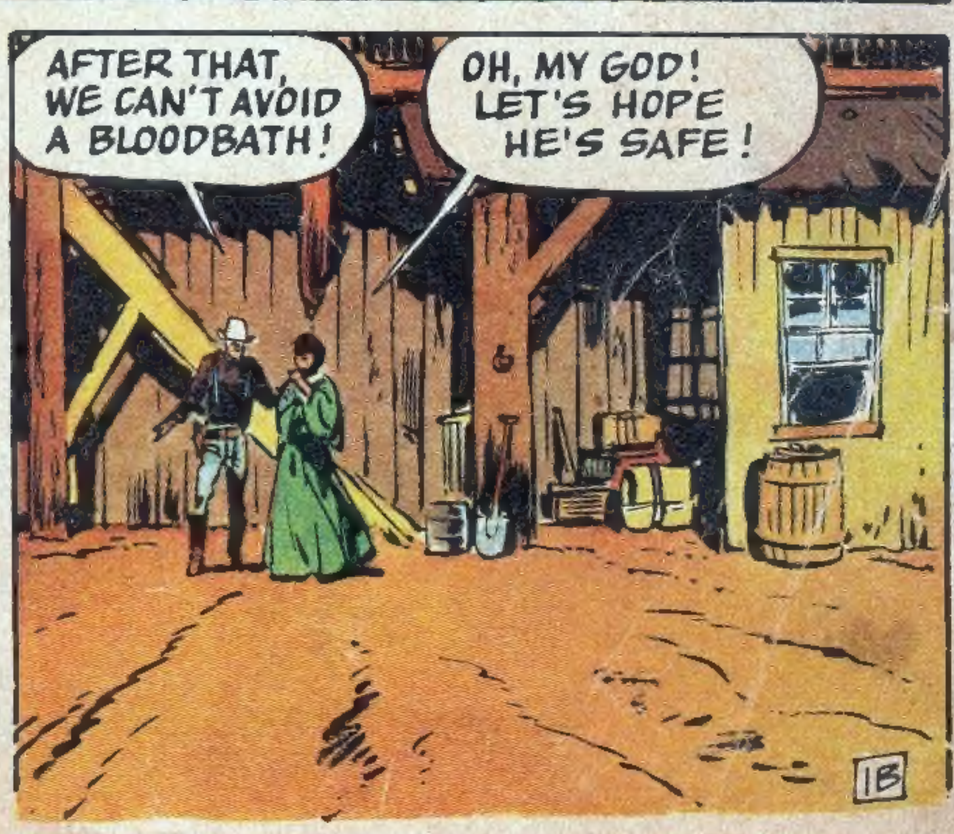
Translated by Anthea Bell and Derek Hockridge

EGMONT/METHUEN

FOR MONTHS NOW THERE HAS BEEN TROUBLE IN THE WEST ... LED BY COCHISE, THE APACHE AND NAVAJO INDIANS ARE ON THE WARPATH. THEY HOLD THE TRAILS AND PASSES... ARIZONA, NEVADA AND NEW MEXICO HAVE FALLEN TO THE INDIANS, WHO HAVE BURNT DESERTED TOWNS, RANCHES AND MINING CAMPS, SLAUGHTERING PROSPECTORS AND FARMERS. GARRISONS HAVE ABANDONED ISOLATED FORTS, AND NO RELIEF COLUMNS CAN GET THROUGH. THIS MORNING, AT CAMP BOWIE, THE ARMY SENT TO TRY AND RESTORE ORDER, UNDER THE COMMAND OF GENERAL CROOK, IS MAKING FINAL PREPARATIONS FOR THE CAMPAIGN ...

LIEUTENANT BLUEBERRY, I'LL SWEAR YOU WERE SCANNING THAT HORIZON AGAIN! YOU'RE NEGLECTING ME SHAMEFULLY, AND I'LL TELL LIEUTENANT CRAIG SO WHEN HE GETS BACK!

YEAH... IF HE GETS BACK...



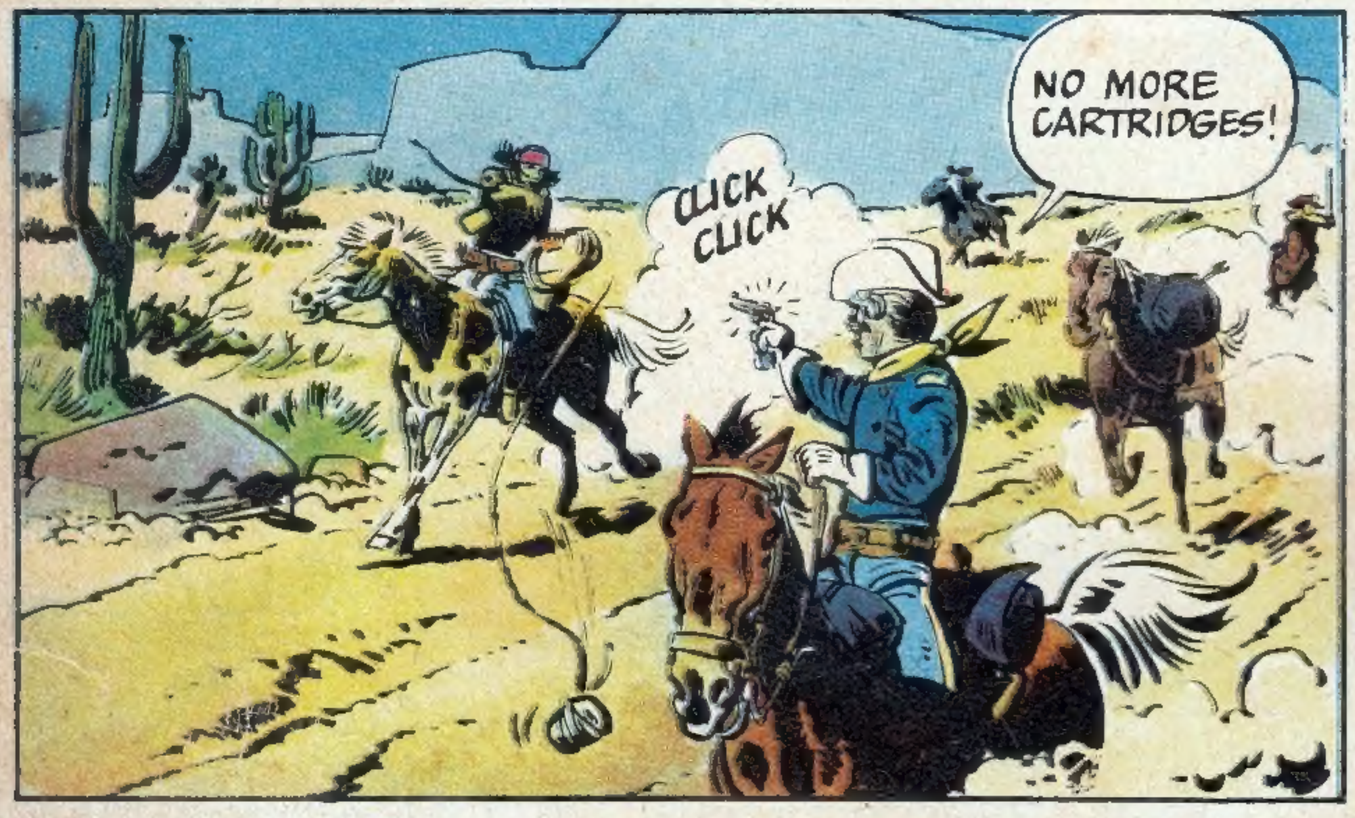
AT THAT MOMENT, LESS THAN A DAY'S RIDE FROM CAMP BOWIE...

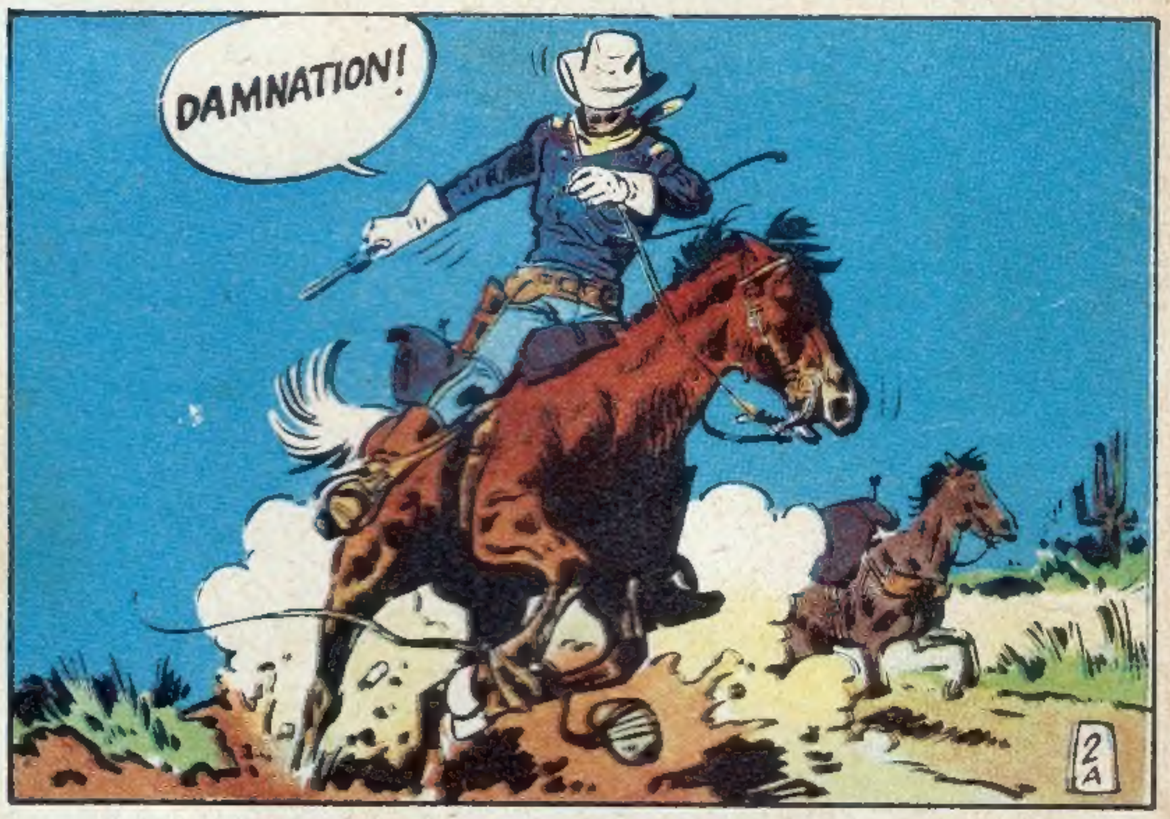
POW!

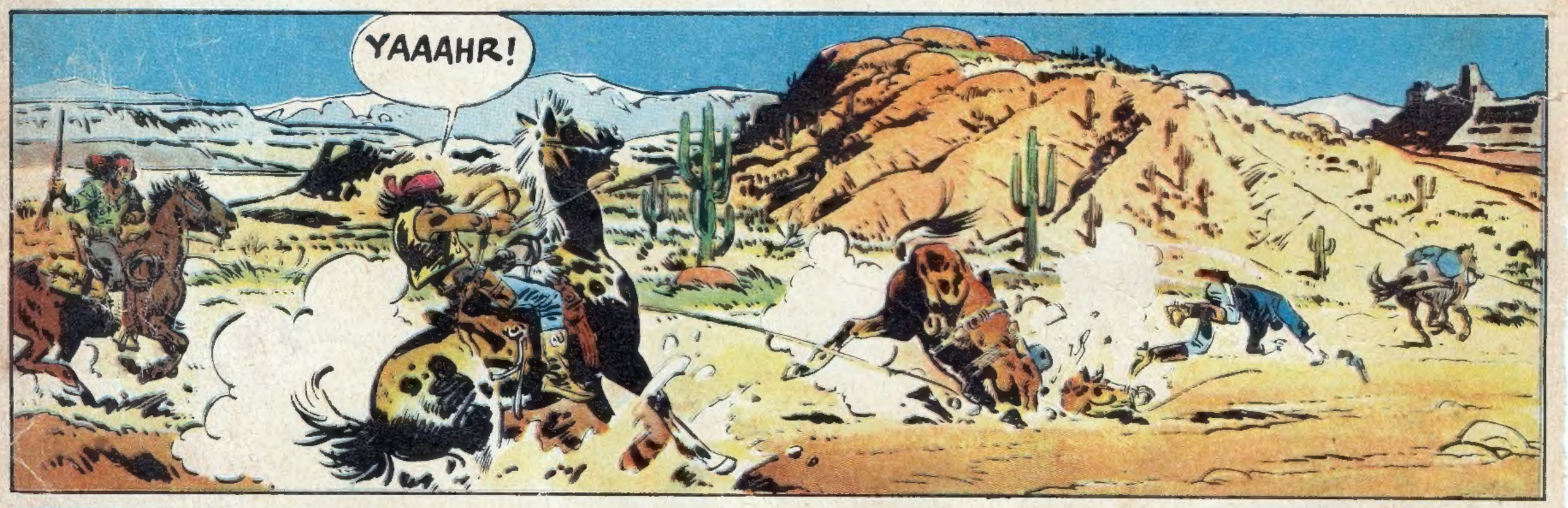
I... I'M DONE FOR! MY HORSE IS ALL IN, AND I'M OUT OF AMMUNITION...

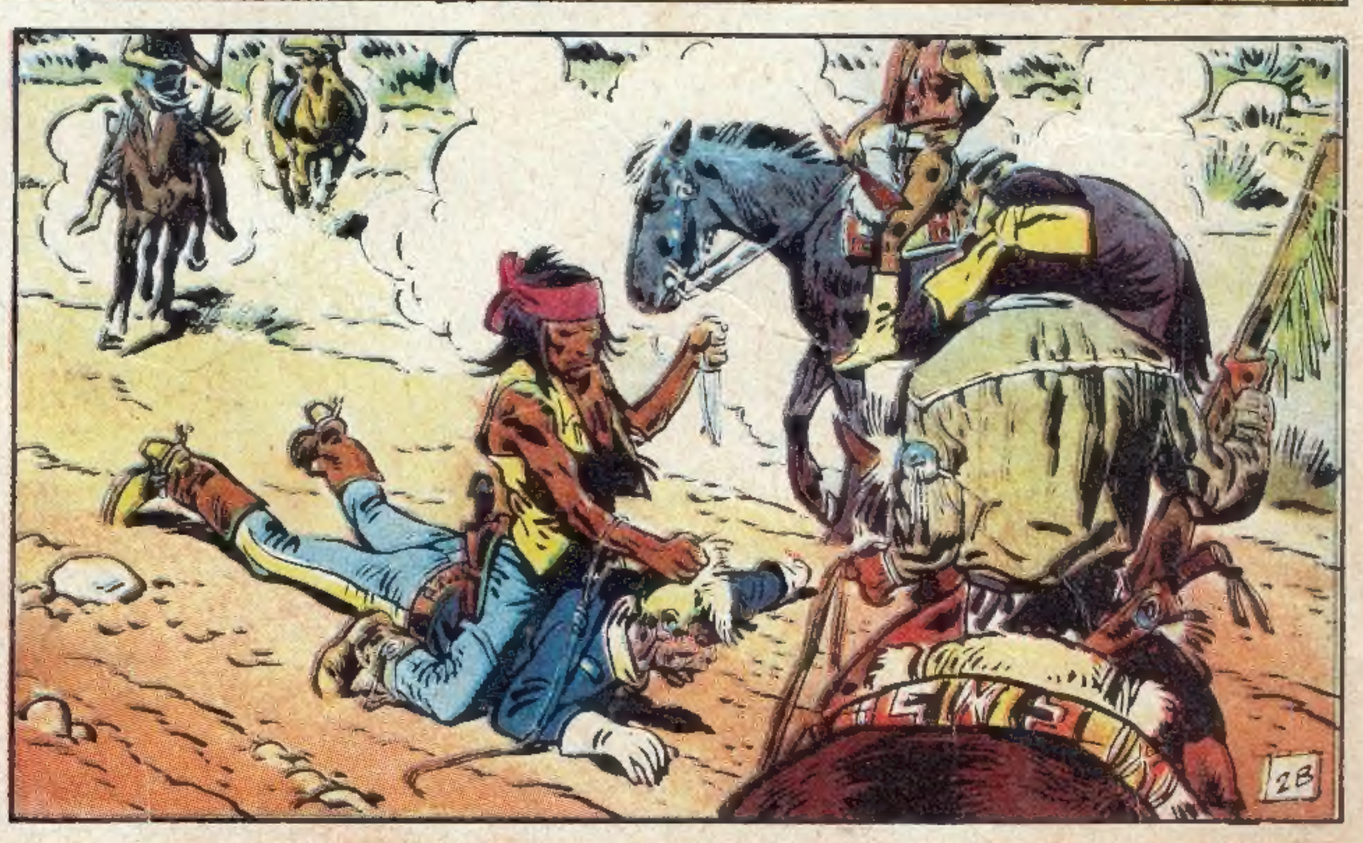
WHOOOP!

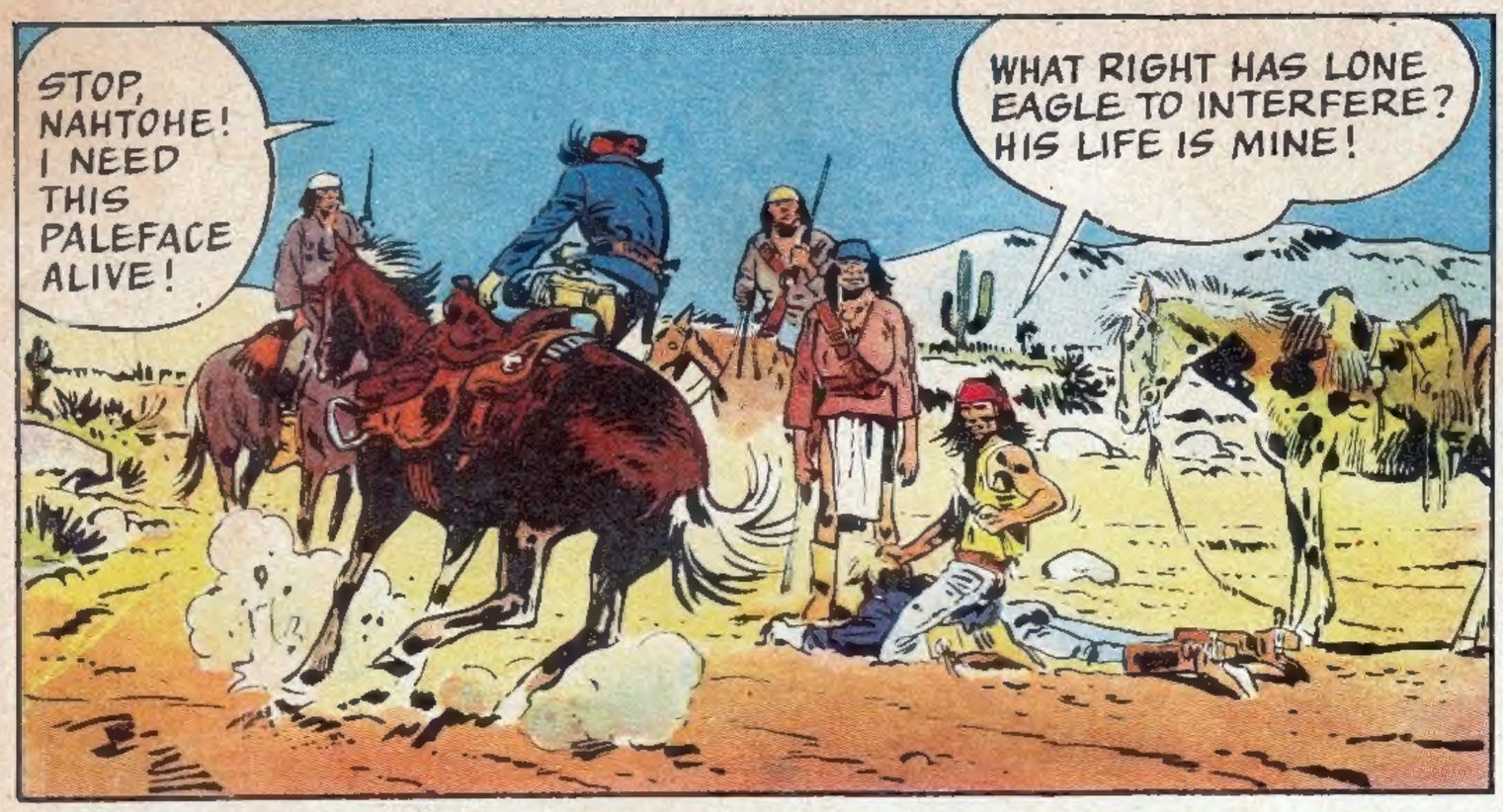
YEEAGH!



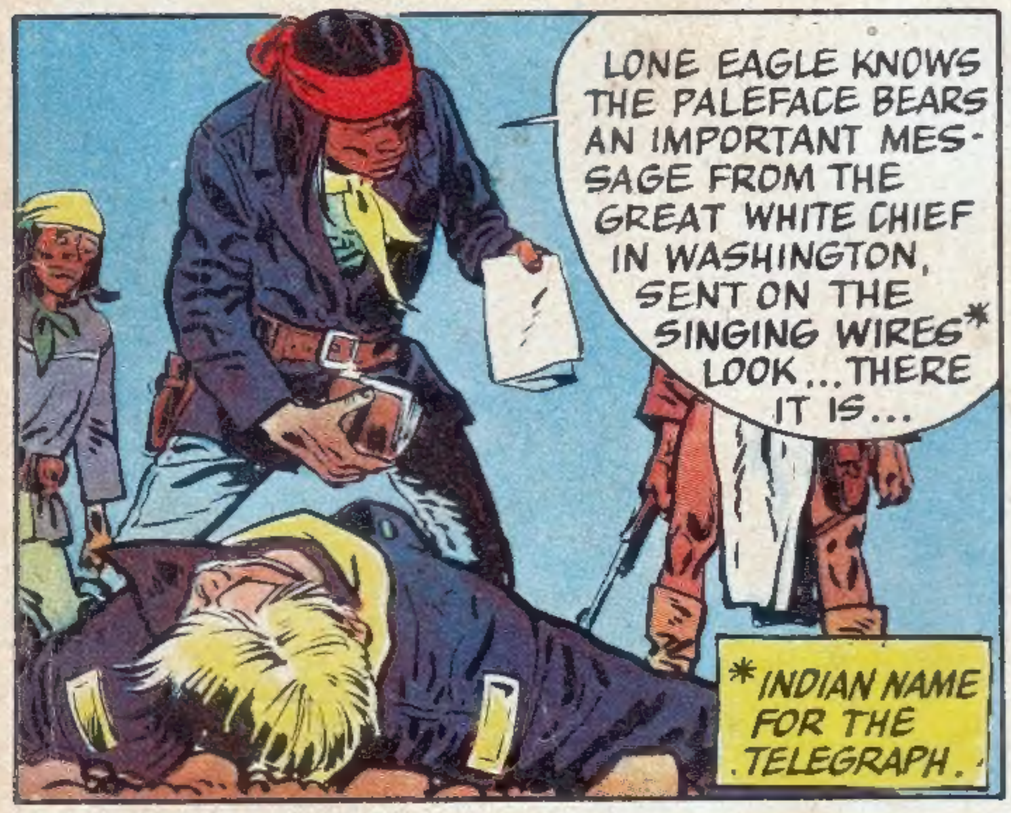


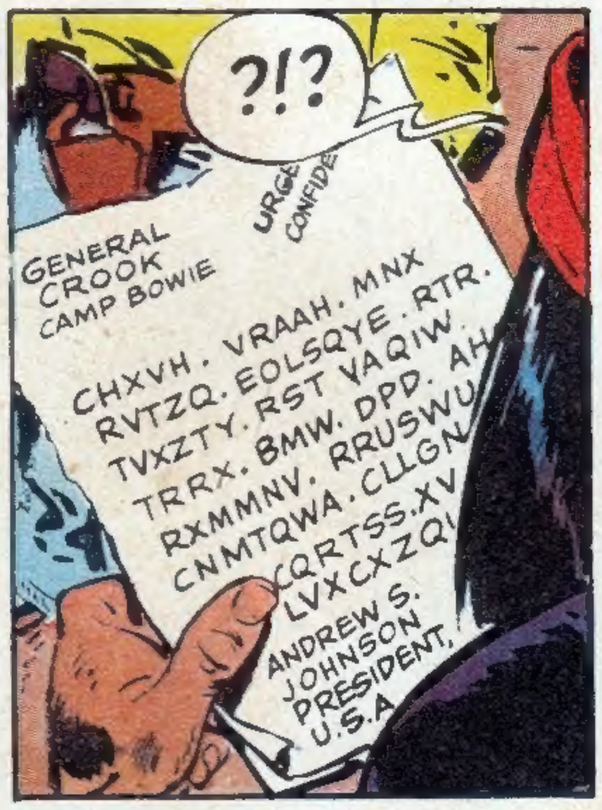


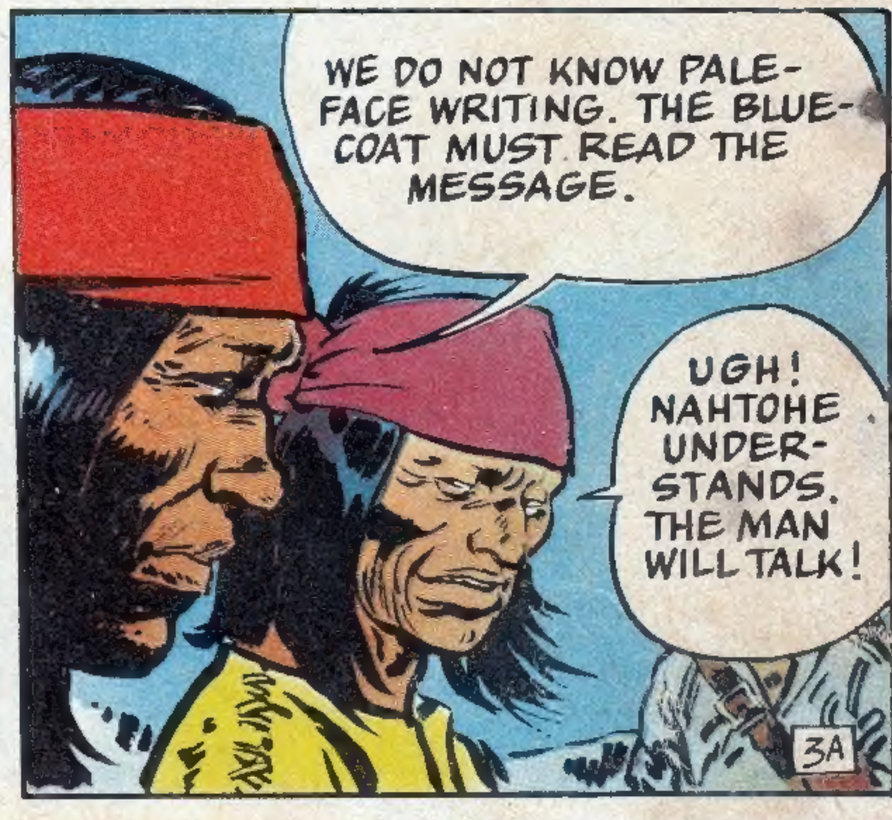



STOP, NAHTOHE! I NEED THIS PALEFACE ALIVE!
WHAT RIGHT HAS LONE EAGLE TO INTERFERE? HIS LIFE IS MINE!

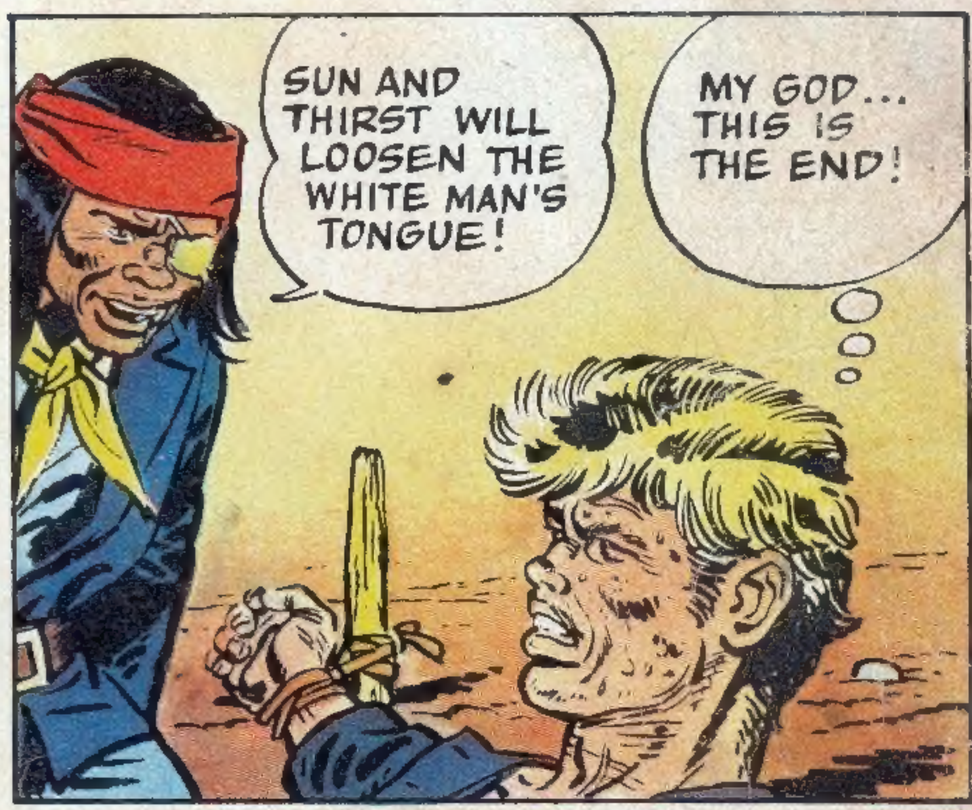
NO ONE GRUDGES YOU HIS SCALP, NAHTOHE. BUT HE MUST TALK FIRST! LONE EAGLE HAS TRAILED HIM FOR NINE DAYS, WAITING TO MEET HIS RED BROTHERS AND ATTACK!

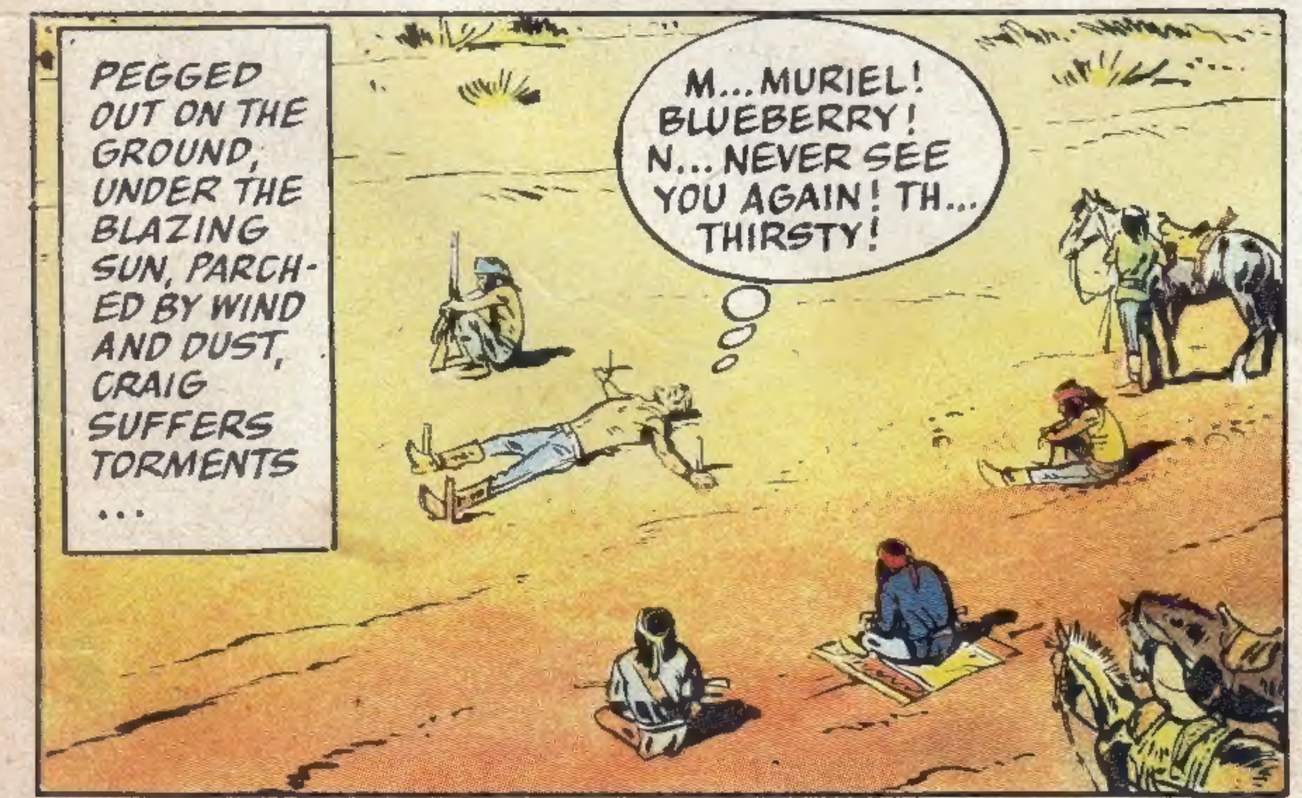

LONE EAGLE KNOWS THE PALEFACE BEARS AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM THE GREAT WHITE CHIEF IN WASHINGTON, SENT ON THE SINGING WIRES* LOOK... THERE IT IS...
*INDIAN NAME FOR THE TELEGRAPH.

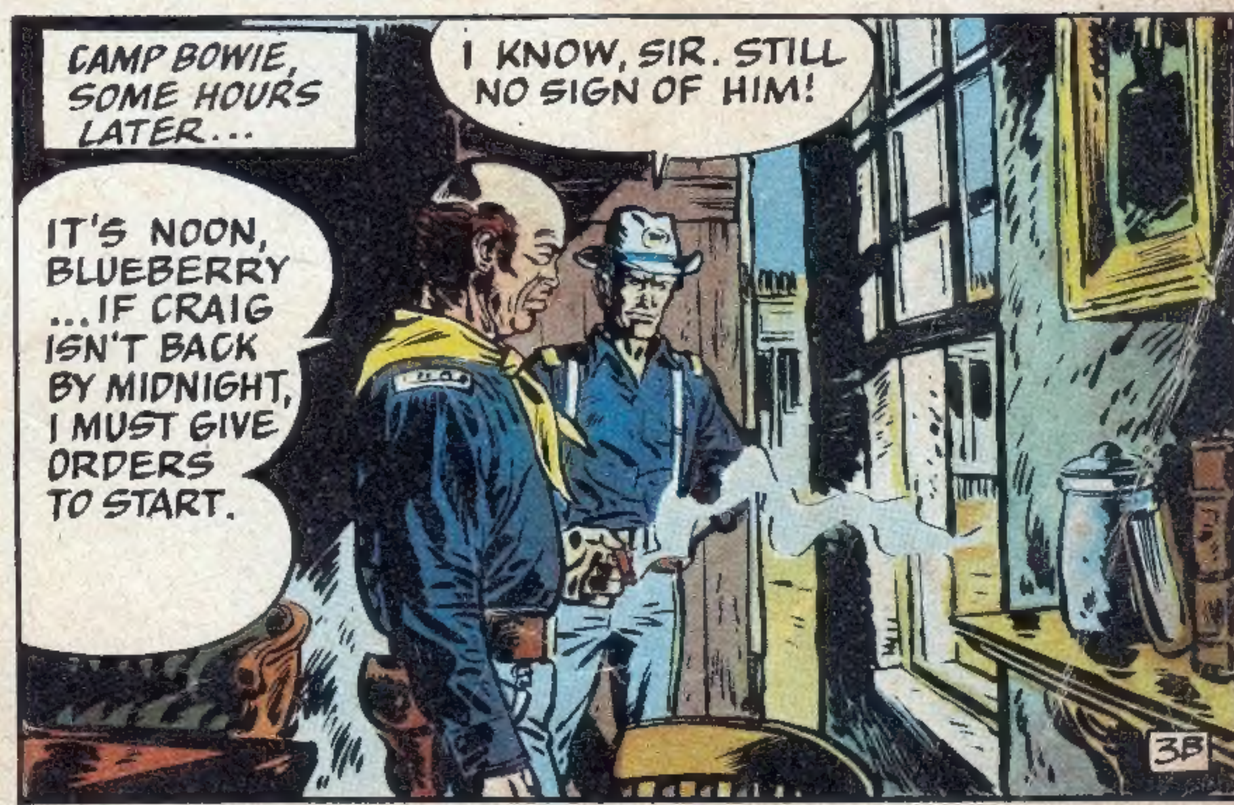

?!?
GENERAL CROOK CAMP BOWIE
URGE CONFIDE
CHXVH. VRAAH. MNX RVTZQ. EOLSQYE. RTR. TVXZTY. RST VAQIW TRRX. BMW. DPD. AH RXMMNV. RRUSWU CNMTQWA. CLLGN CQRTSS.XV LVXCXZQ
ANDREW S. JOHNSON PRESIDENT, U.S.A


WE DO NOT KNOW PALEFACE WRITING. THE BLUECOAT MUST READ THE MESSAGE.
UGH! NAHTOHE UNDERSTANDS. THE MAN WILL TALK!
3A

R... READ YOU THE MESSAGE? NEVER YOU SCUM! IN ANY CASE, I COULDN'T!
IT IS WRITTEN IN A SECRET LANGUAGE ... A CODE I DON'T KNOW!
NAHTOHE CAN MAKE MEN TALK!
YOU LIE! YOU HOPE TO DECEIVE US!


SUN AND THIRST WILL LOOSEN THE WHITE MAN'S TONGUE!
MY GOD... THIS IS THE END!

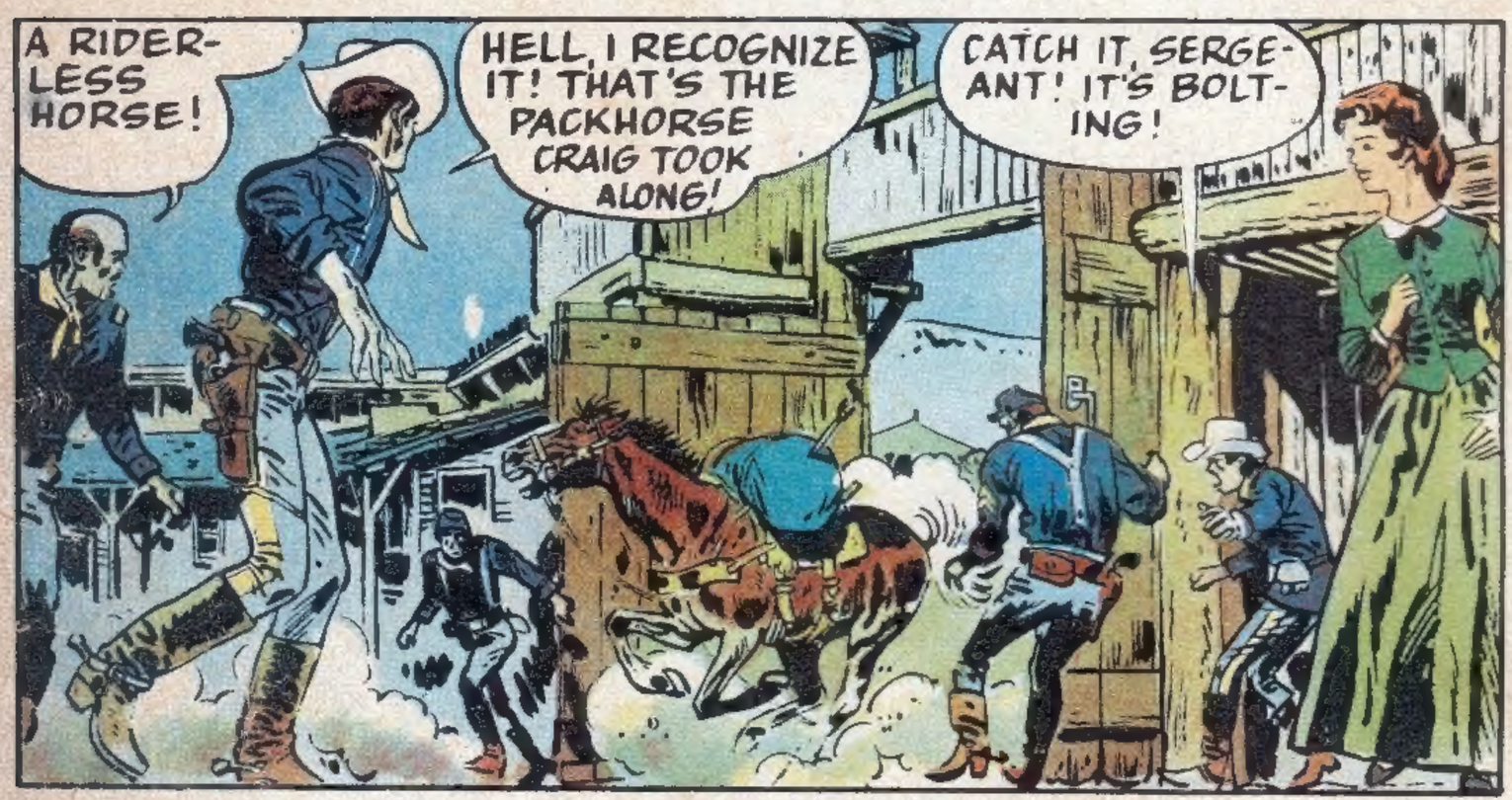

PEGGED OUT ON THE GROUND, UNDER THE BLAZING SUN, PARCHED BY WIND AND DUST, CRAIG SUFFERS TORMENTS ...
M... MURIEL! BLUEBERRY! N... NEVER SEE YOU AGAIN! TH... THIRSTY!


CAMP BOWIE, SOME HOURS LATER...
I KNOW, SIR. STILL NO SIGN OF HIM!
IT'S NOON, BLUEBERRY ...IF CRAIG ISN'T BACK BY MIDNIGHT, I MUST GIVE ORDERS TO START.
3B

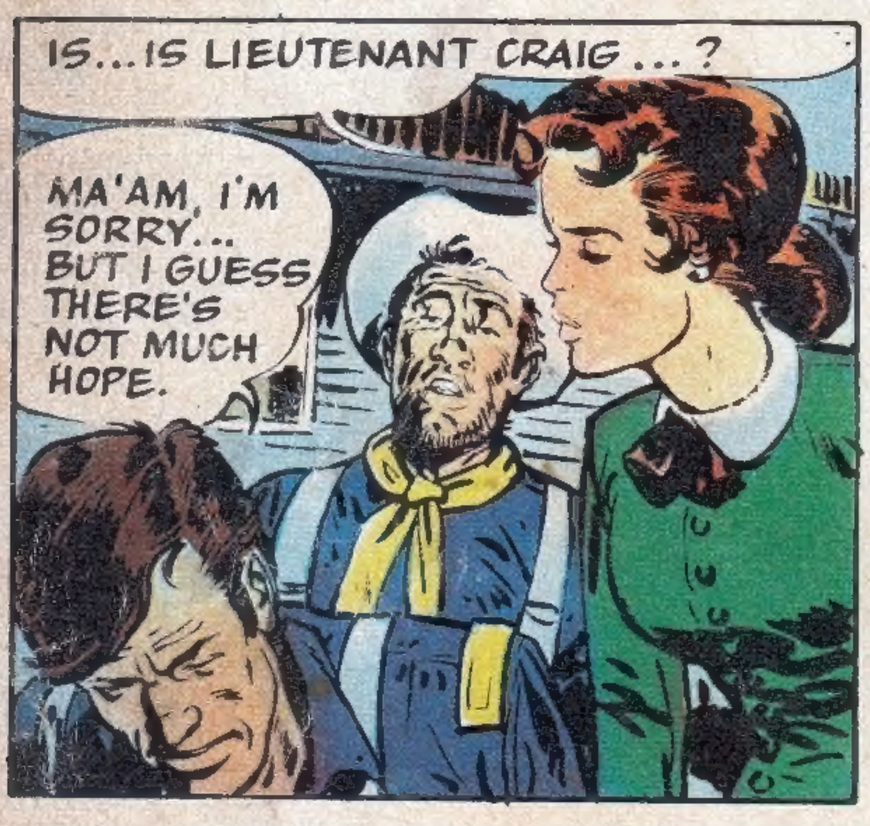
I GUESS WE WON'T BE SEEING POOR CRAIG AGAIN...I KNEW IT WAS CRAZY! WHY THE DEVIL DID I LISTEN TO YOU TWO? I...
LISTEN, SIR! HEAR THAT NOISE? SOMETHING'S UP!

IT...IT MUST BE CRAIG BACK! AT LAST!

A HORSEMAN AND IN A HURRY ...OPEN THE GATES!


A RIDERLESS HORSE!
HELL, I RECOGNIZE IT! THAT'S THE PACKHORSE CRAIG TOOK ALONG!
CATCH IT, SERGEANT! IT'S BOLTING!

BUT THE EXHAUSTED HORSE HAS COLLAPSED ...
LOOK! AN APACHE ARROW...


IS...IS LIEUTENANT CRAIG ...?
MA'AM, I'M SORRY... BUT I GUESS THERE'S NOT MUCH HOPE.

MAYBE THE INDIANS ONLY TOOK HIM PRISONER ...?
LET'S HOPE NOT, MISS DICKSON. HE'D BE BETTER OFF DEAD!

IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT! YOUR CRAZY NOTIONS SENT YOUR FRIEND TO HIS DEATH!
HUSH, MISS DICKSON!

LIEUTENANT CRAIG VOLUNTEERED TO RISK HIS OWN LIFE TO SAVE HUNDREDS OF OTHERS... I AM THE MAN RESPONSIBLE FOR AGREEING TO BLUEBERRY'S SUGGESTIONS!
THANKS, SIR!
WELL, NEGOTIATING WITH COCHISE WAS A CRAZY IDEA!
WE HAVE TO WIPE THOSE REDSKIN VERMIN OUT!

MISS DICKSON, I SWEAR I'D HAVE GIVEN MY OWN LIFE FOR CRAIG'S! I...
GO TO HELL!

MA'AM, LISTEN TO ME! YOU MUST...
LET HER BE!

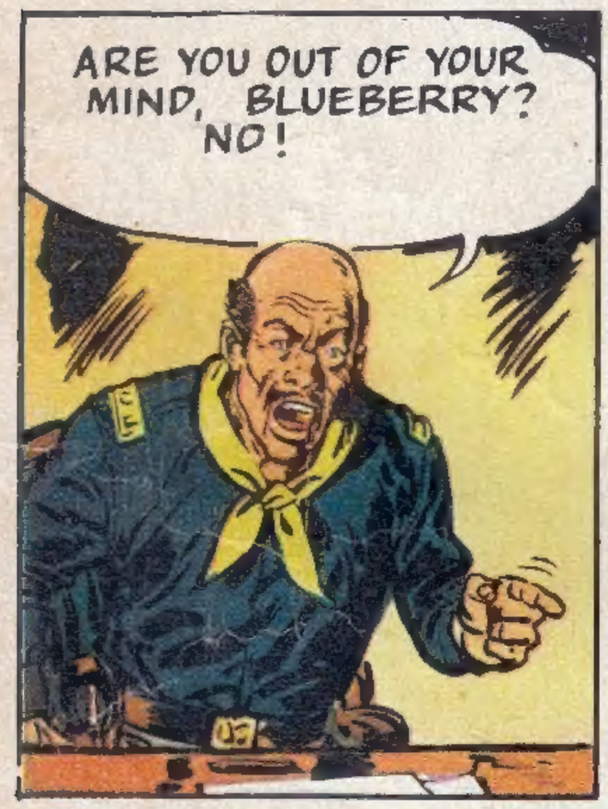
NOTHING YOU CAN SAY WILL HELP. LEAVE THE POOR CHILD ALONE...SHE'S UPSET. AS YOU KNOW, SHE'S ALREADY LOST HER FATHER OUT HERE IN THE WEST.*
*SEE "FORT NAVAJO"

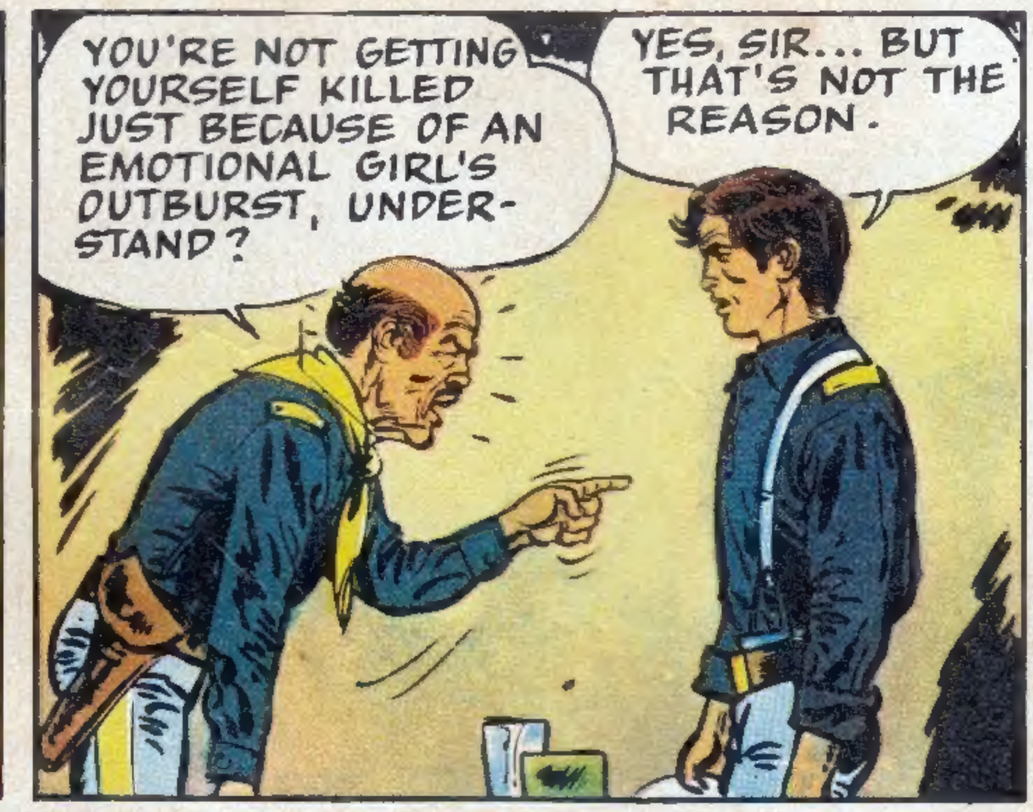
AND NOW CRAIG! POOR FELLOW! I GUESS SHE WAS HALF IN LOVE WITH HIM.
YOU... YOU THINK SO, SIR?

WELL, THAT SETTLES IT... THE ARMY LEAVES CAMP BOWIE AT DAWN!

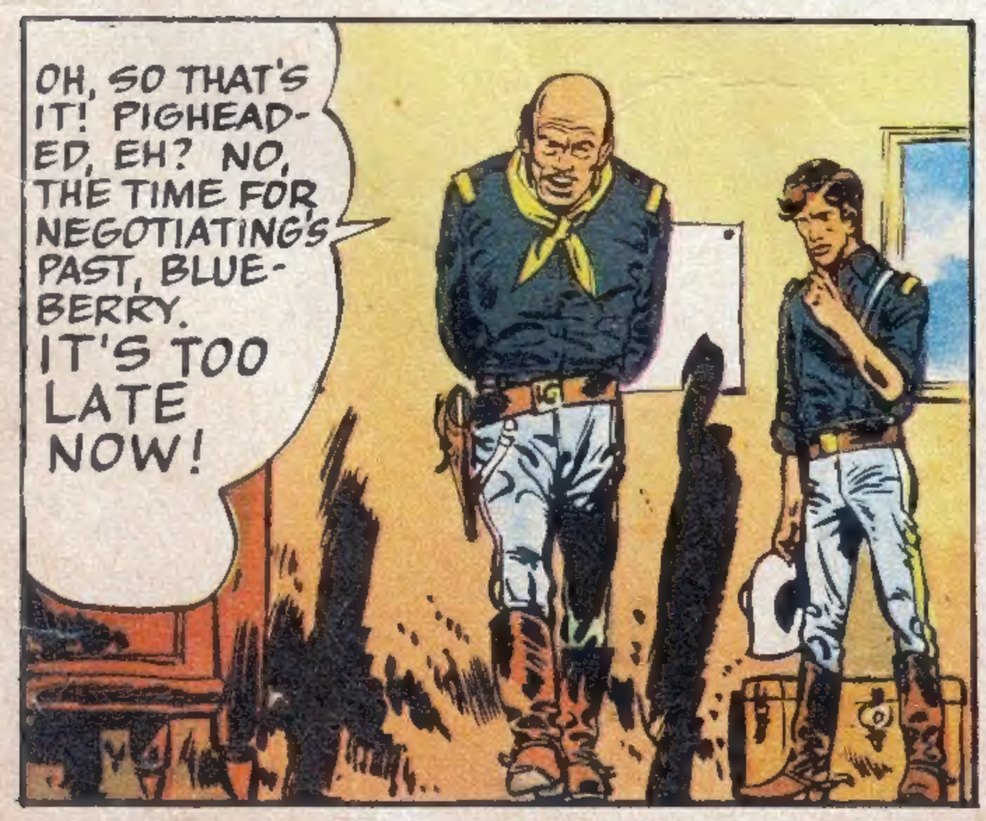
WH...WHAT? SIR... I'D APPRECIATE A WORD WITH YOU...ALONE.
?!!?

SIR, WILL YOU GIVE ME TILL MIDNIGHT TO GO LOOK FOR CRAIG?
I'M LISTENING.
5A


ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR MIND, BLUEBERRY? NO!


YOU'RE NOT GETTING YOURSELF KILLED JUST BECAUSE OF AN EMOTIONAL GIRL'S OUTBURST, UNDERSTAND?
YES, SIR... BUT THAT'S NOT THE REASON.

IF THEY KILLED CRAIG, THE APACHES WILL HAVE LEFT HIS BODY ON THE SPOT... AND THERE'S A GOOD CHANCE OF FINDING THE PRESIDENT'S REPLY ON HIM!


OH, SO THAT'S IT! PIGHEADED, EH? NO, THE TIME FOR NEGOTIATING'S PAST, BLUEBERRY. IT'S TOO LATE NOW!

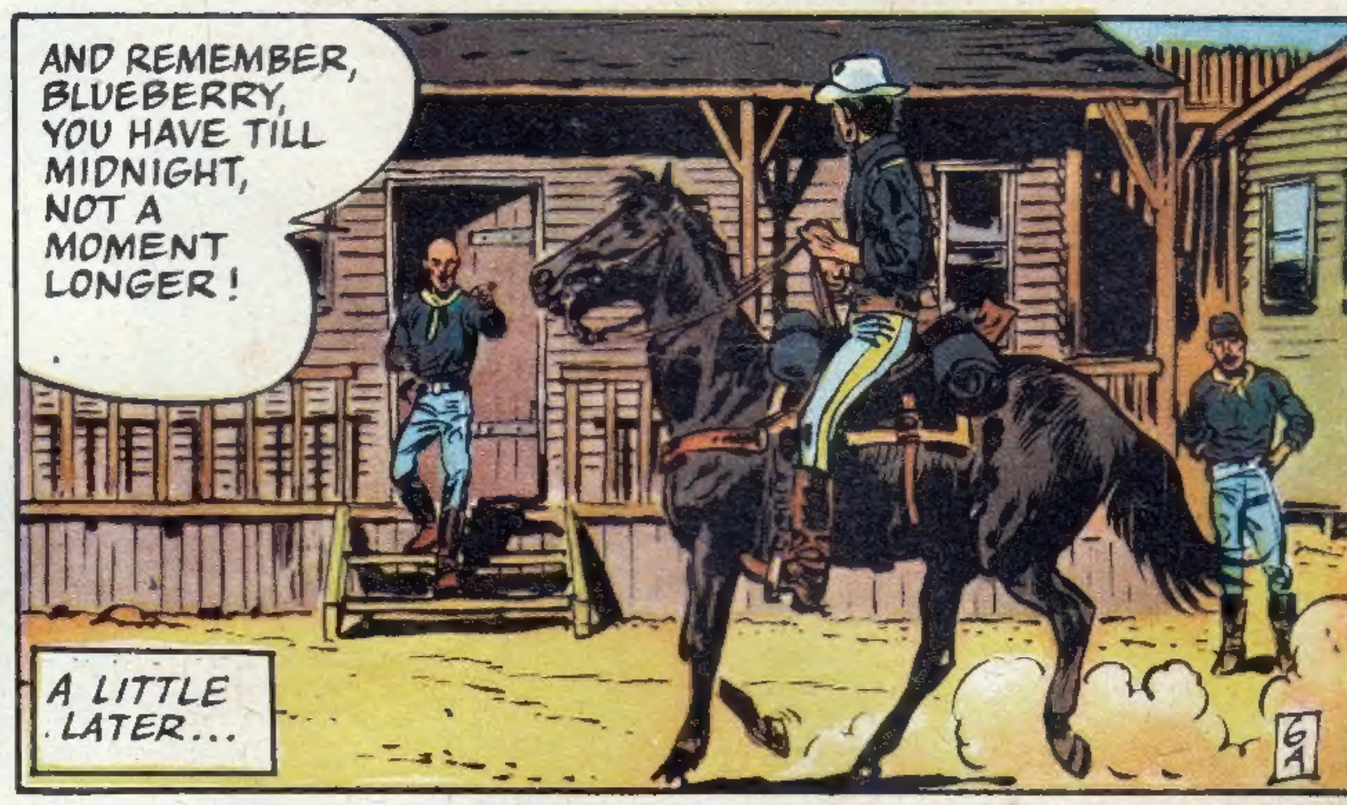
BUT... SUPPOSE CRAIG HAD A REPLY AUTHORIZING YOU TO TRY AND NEGOTIATE WITH COCHISE, SIR?
WHAT??

HM... YES, THAT COULD BE AWKWARD...
AND POOR CRAIG WOULD HAVE DIED IN VAIN!
5B

YOU AND YOUR FOOL IDEAS! WHY DID I HAVE TO GET LANDED WITH YOU? GOOD GOD, YOU DON'T HAVE A CHANCE OF FINDING CRAIG'S BODY!
I GUESS I DO, SIR. I'D SAY THE APACHES ATTACKED HIM QUITE CLOSE. THAT PACK-HORSE MADE ITS WAY BACK IN ONE STAGE...

YES... THAT FIGURES, BUT...
IT MUST HAVE BOLTED DURING THE FIGHT... THERE'LL BE A FRESH TRAIL I CAN FOLLOW.

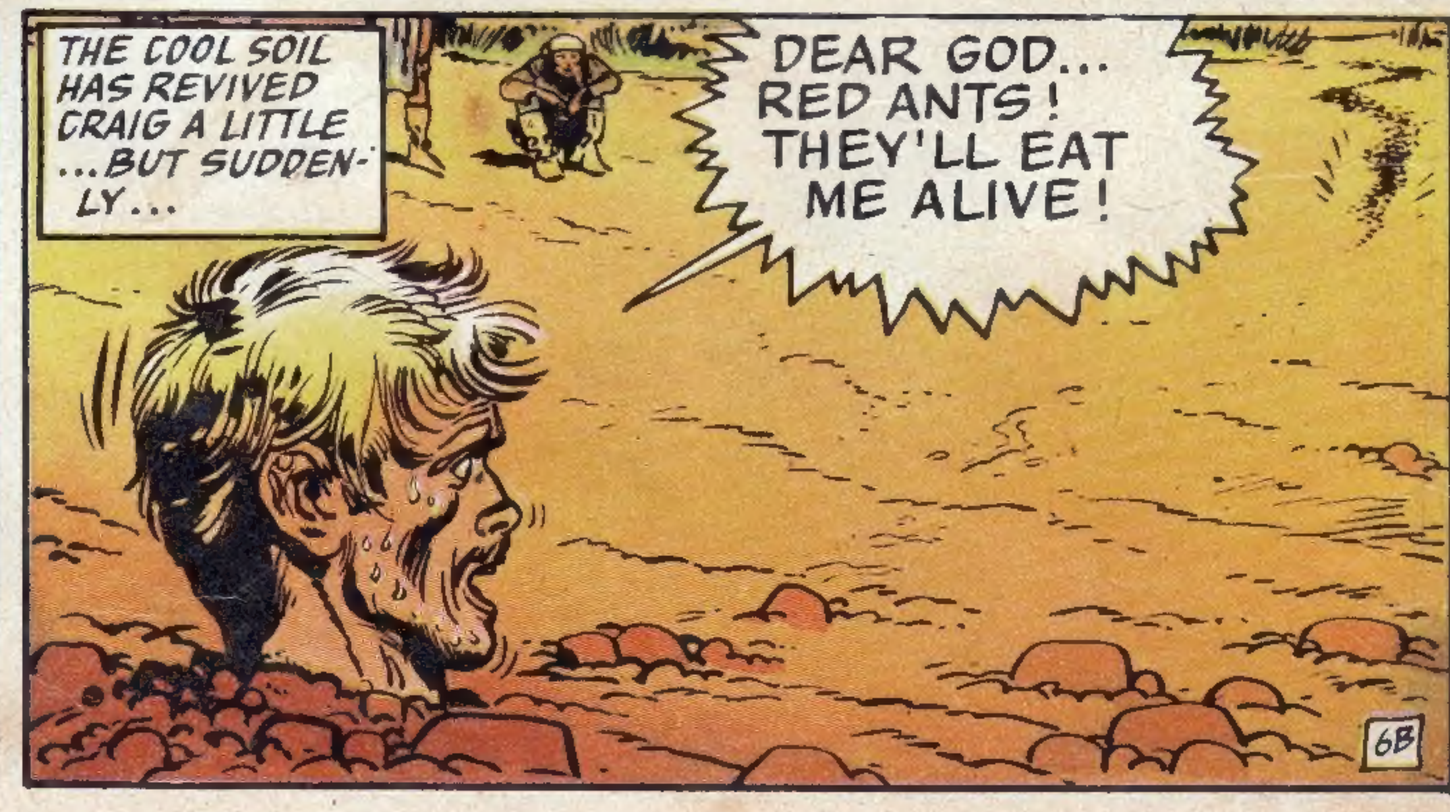
OKAY, OKAY! GET OUT OF HERE, THEN! IF YOU INSIST ON GETTING SLAUGHTER-ED, I GUESS THAT'S YOUR AFFAIR!
THANKS, SIR!

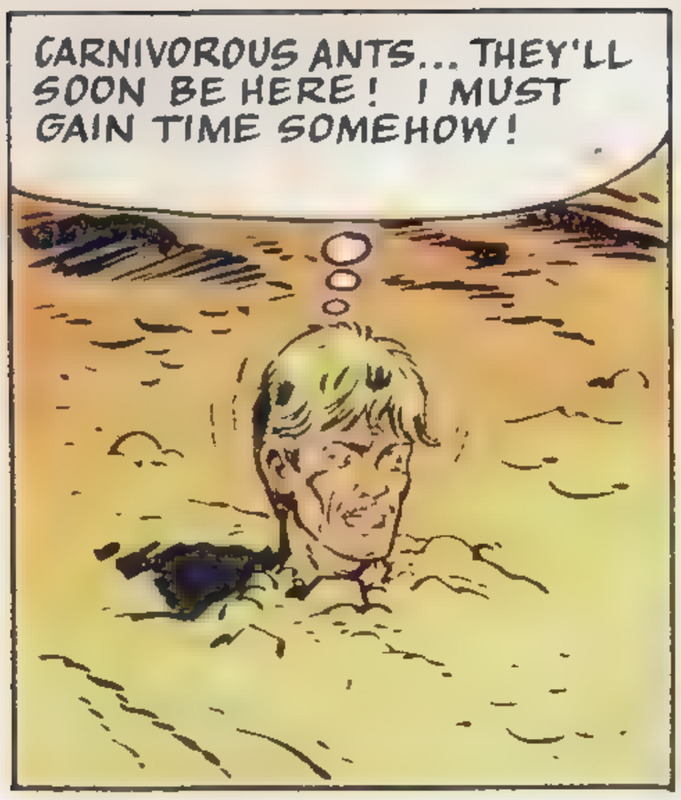

AND REMEMBER, BLUEBERRY, YOU HAVE TILL MIDNIGHT, NOT A MOMENT LONGER!
A LITTLE LATER...

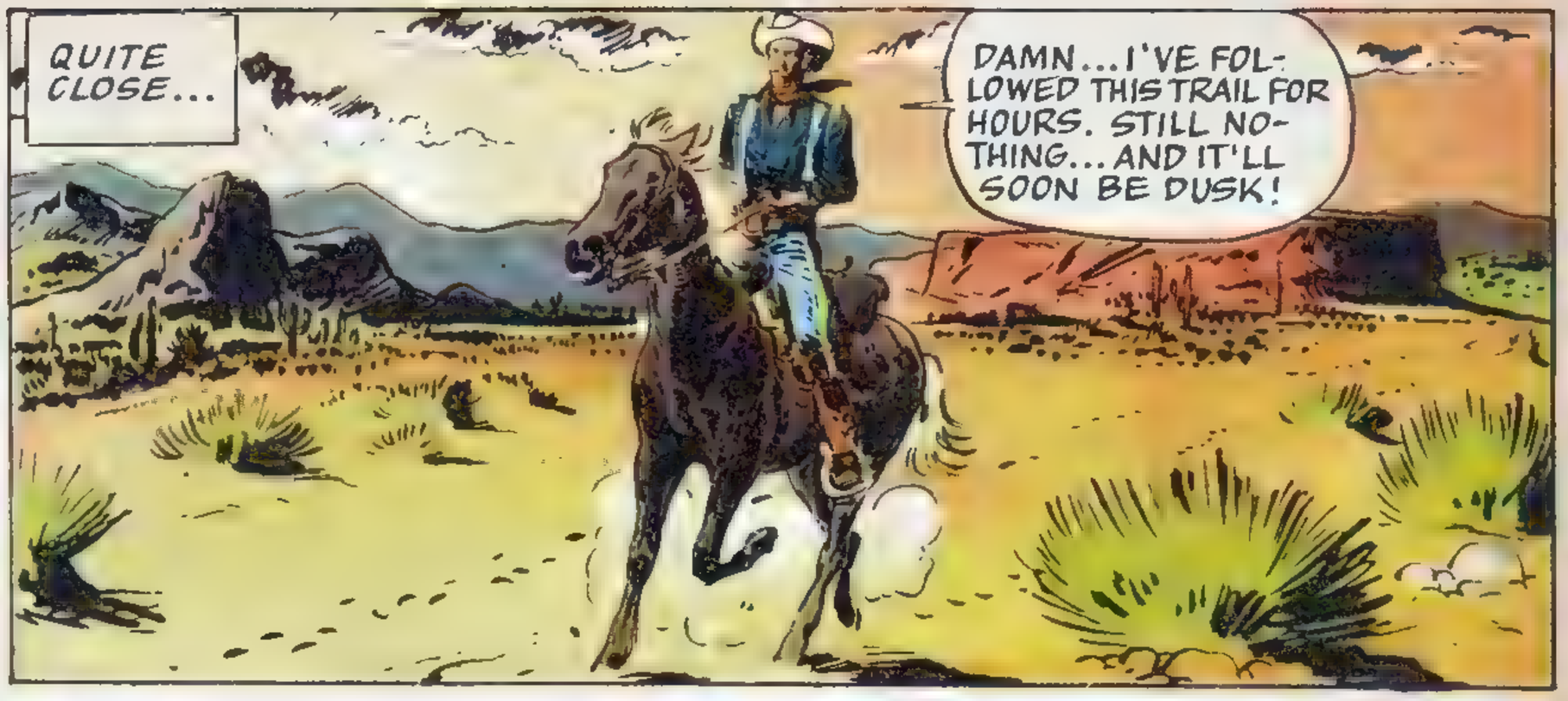
A FEW HOURS' RIDE AWAY...
MY... MY HEAD! WATER! WATER!
TALK, AND YOU GET WAT-ER.
THE PALEFACE IS BRAVE... HE WILL DIE RATHER THAN TALK!
AND THE SUN IS PAST ITS HEIGHT!

HE WILL TALK! NO ONE CAN WITHSTAND THE RED ANTS! LET MY BROTHERS DIG A HOLE TO BURY THE BLUECOAT!
I SEE AN ANTHILL THERE...

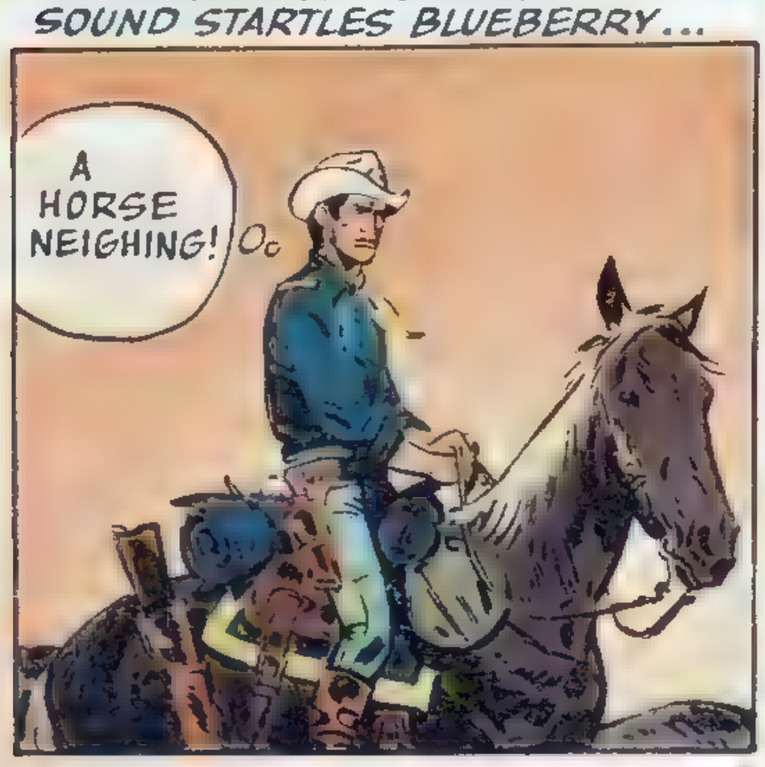
AN HOUR LATER...
THE SWEET JUICE OF THIS CACTUS WILL LEAD THE ANTS TO THE PALEFACE WITHIN THE HOUR. NAHTOHE HAS DESTROYED THEIR NEST...

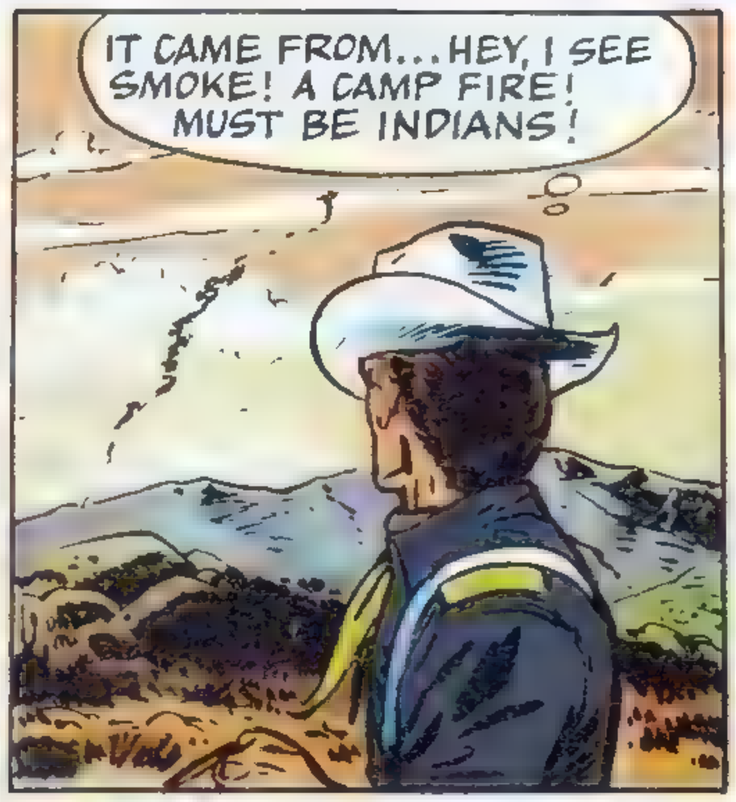

THE COOL SOIL HAS REVIVED CRAIG A LITTLE ...BUT SUDDEN-LY...
DEAR GOD... RED ANTS! THEY'LL EAT ME ALIVE!

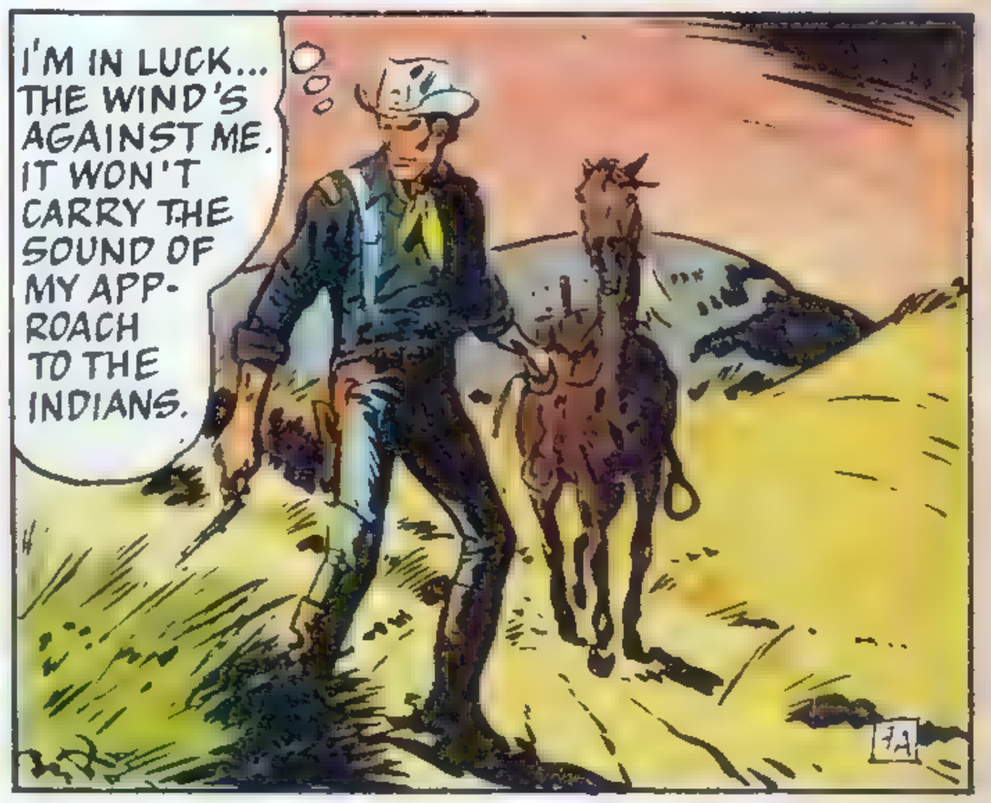


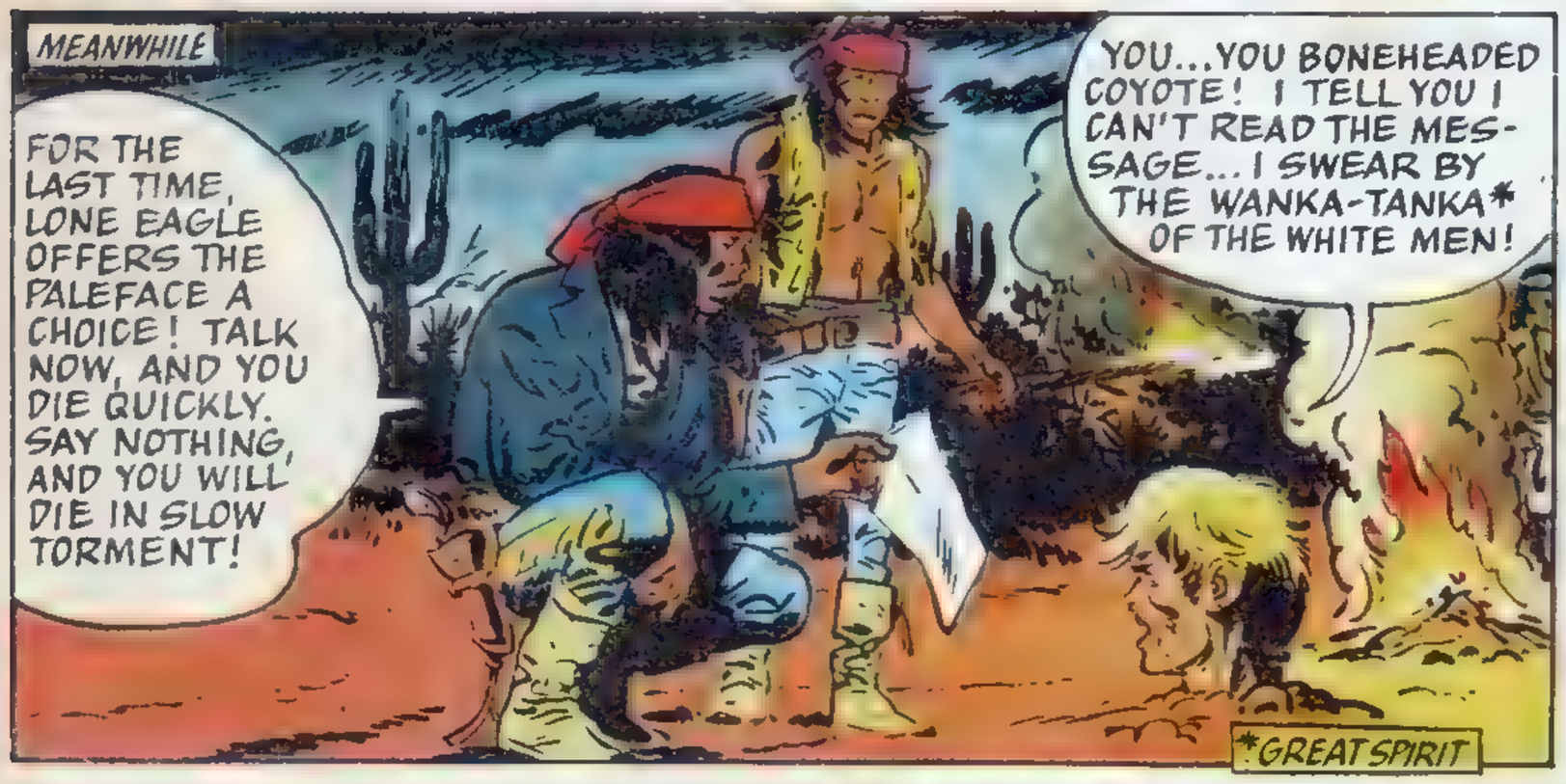


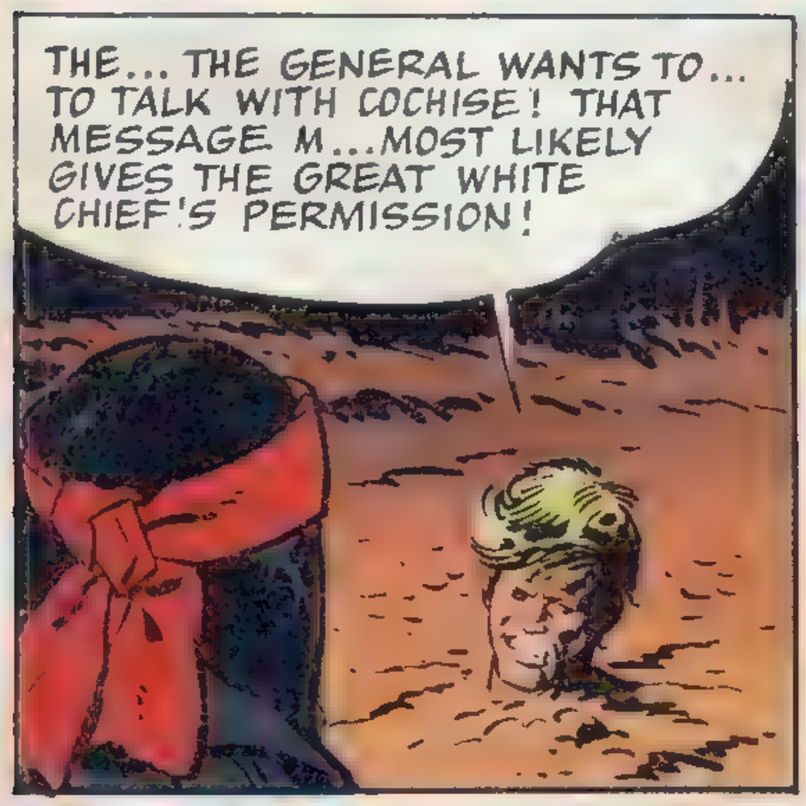
BUT SUDDENLY A DISTANT SOUND STARTLES BLUEBERRY...

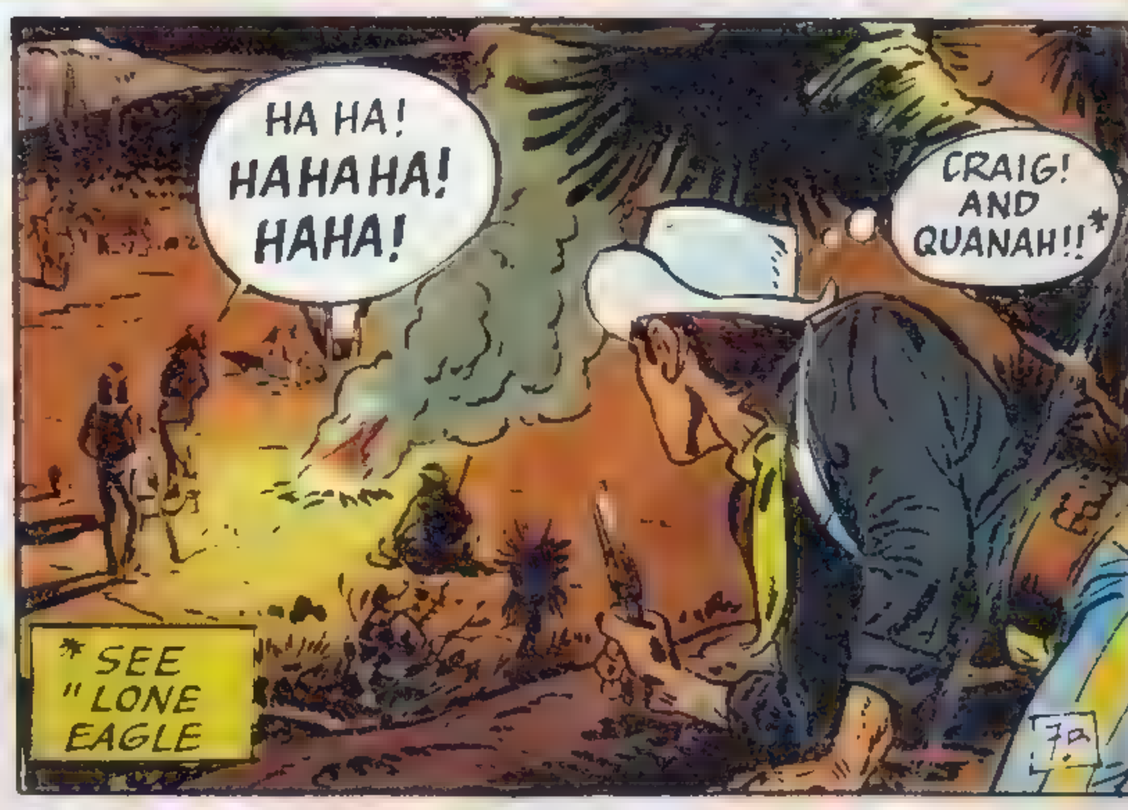


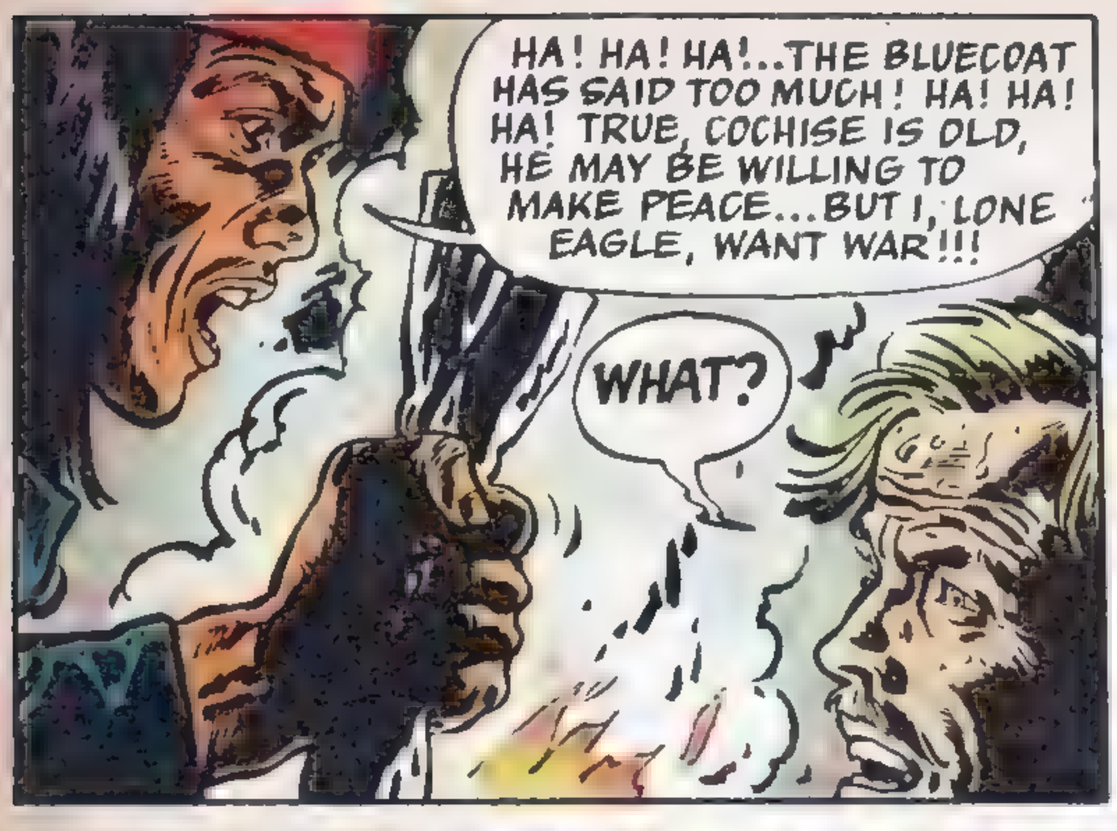


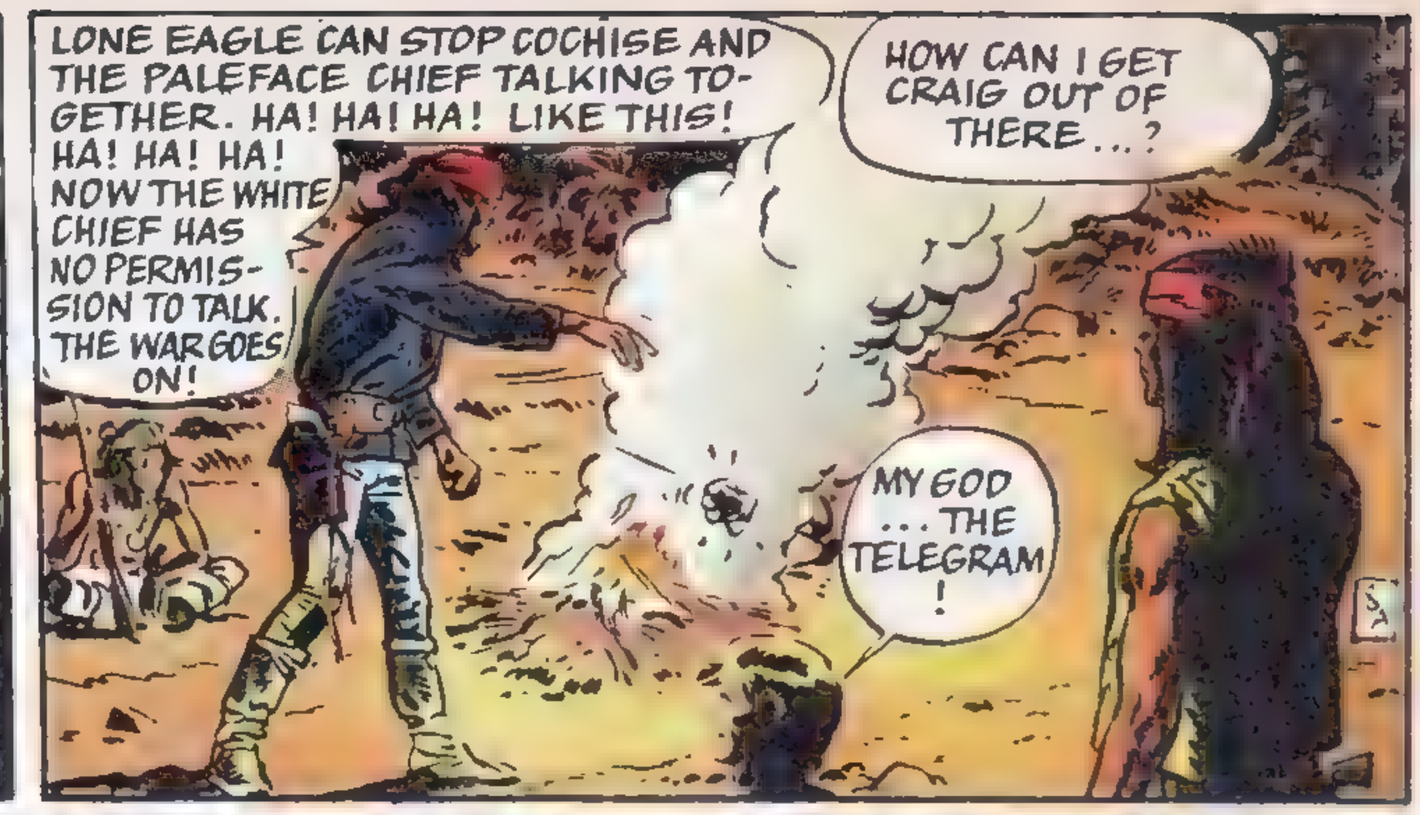




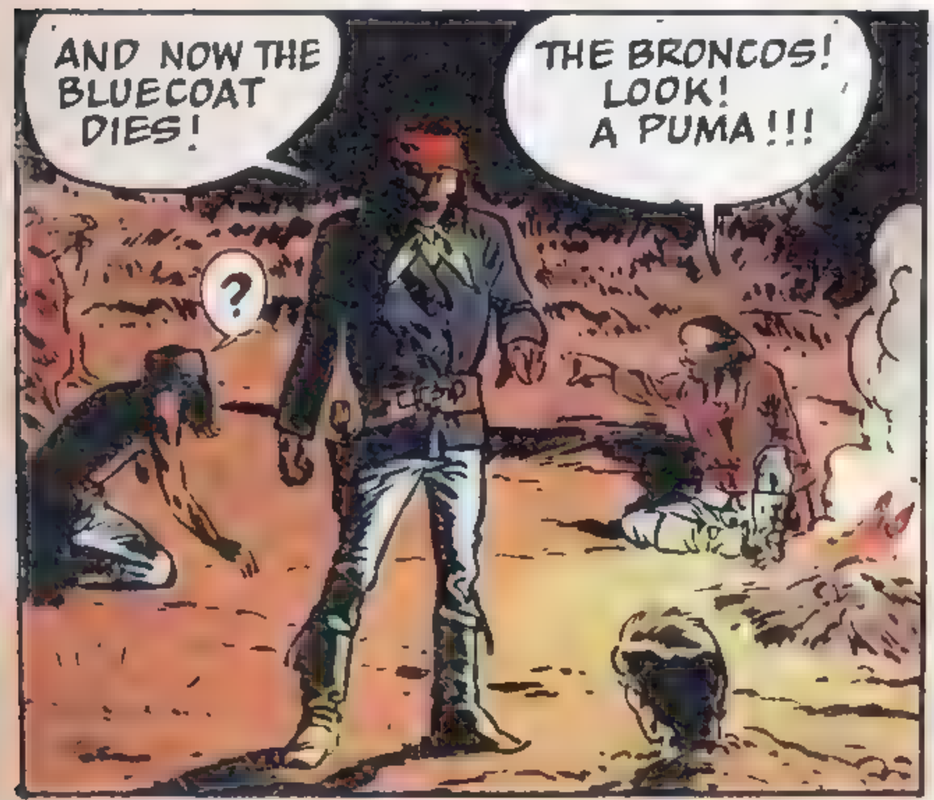





HA! HA! HA!...THE BLUECOAT HAS SAID TOO MUCH! HA! HA! HA! TRUE, COCHISE IS OLD, HE MAY BE WILLING TO MAKE PEACE...BUT I, LONE EAGLE, WANT WAR!!!
WHAT?


LONE EAGLE CAN STOP COCHISE AND THE PALEFACE CHIEF TALKING TOGETHER. HA! HA! HA! LIKE THIS! HA! HA! HA! NOW THE WHITE CHIEF HAS NO PERMISSION TO TALK. THE WAR GOES ON!
HOW CAN I GET CRAIG OUT OF THERE...?
MY GOD ...THE TELEGRAM !

BUT BLUEBERRY IS IN LUCK ...THE INDIANS' PONIES, THOUGH HOBBLED, HAVE STRAYED FROM THE CAMP, AND...
GRRR! GRRR!

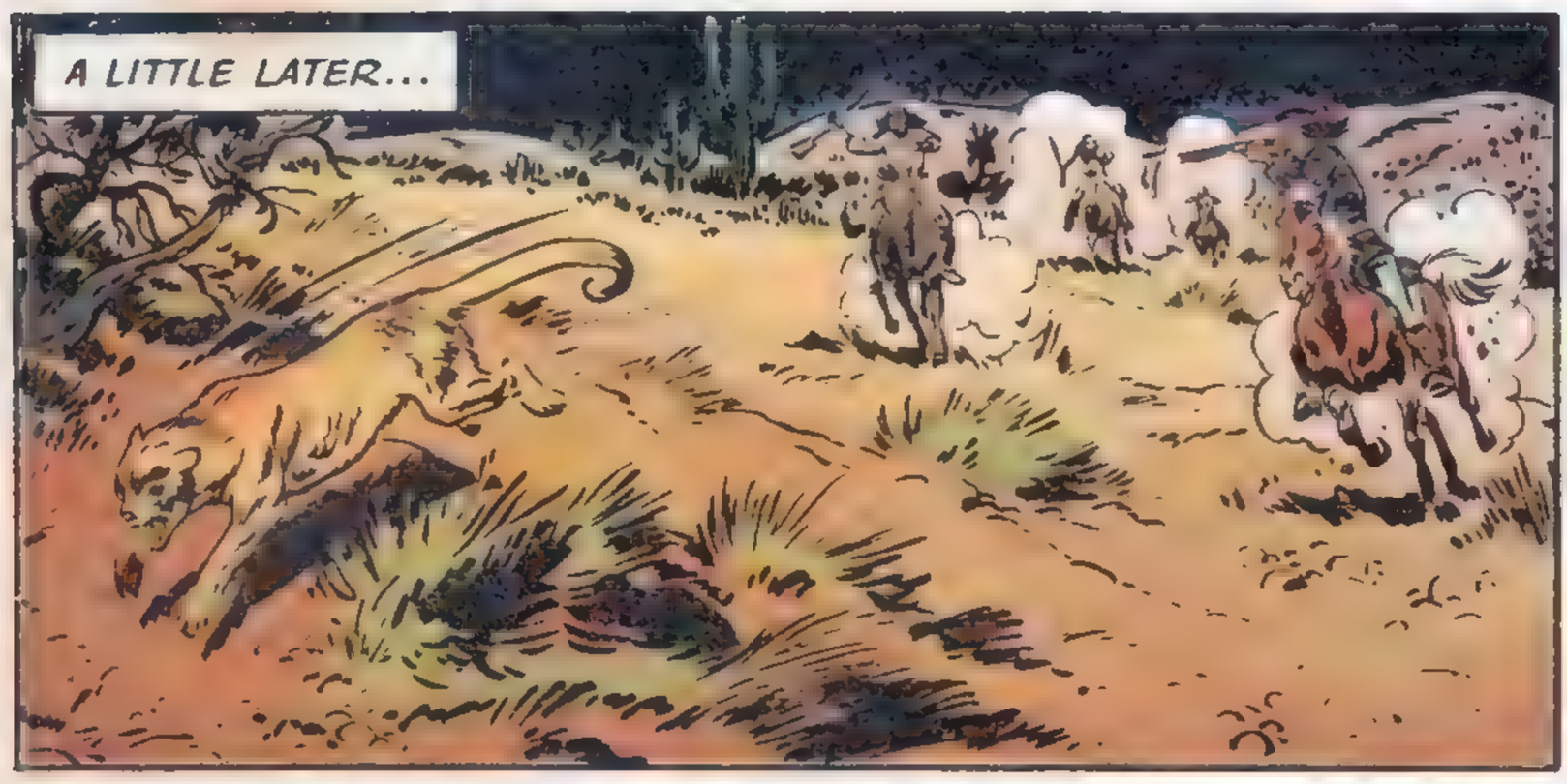

AND NOW THE BLUECOAT DIES!
?
THE BRONCOS! LOOK! A PUMA!!!

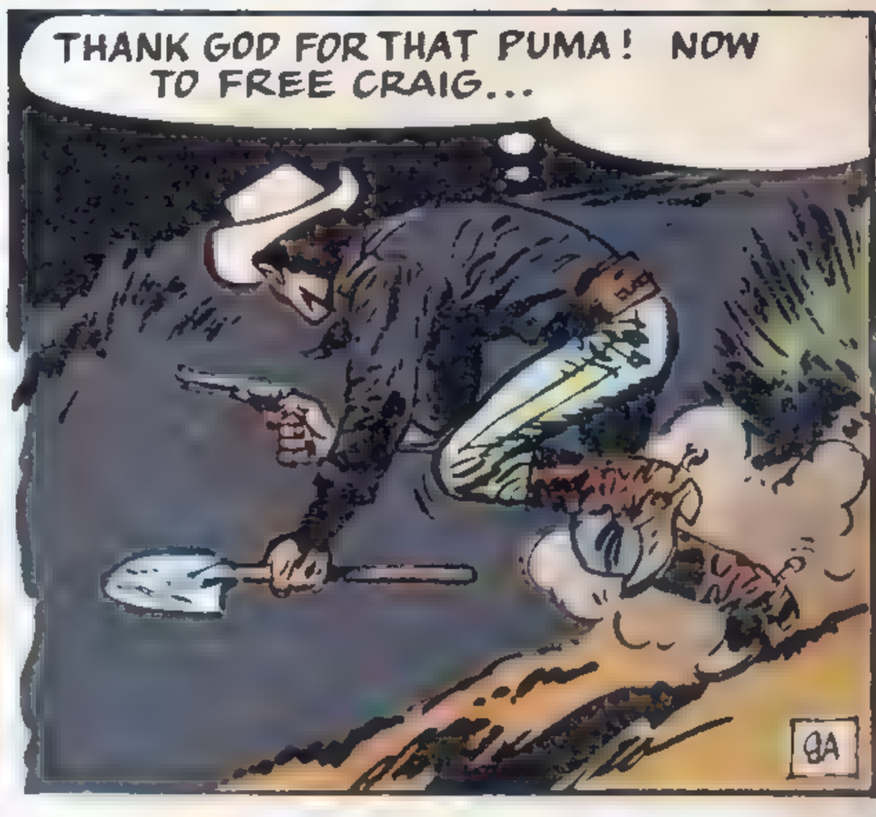
QUICK! THE HORSES!

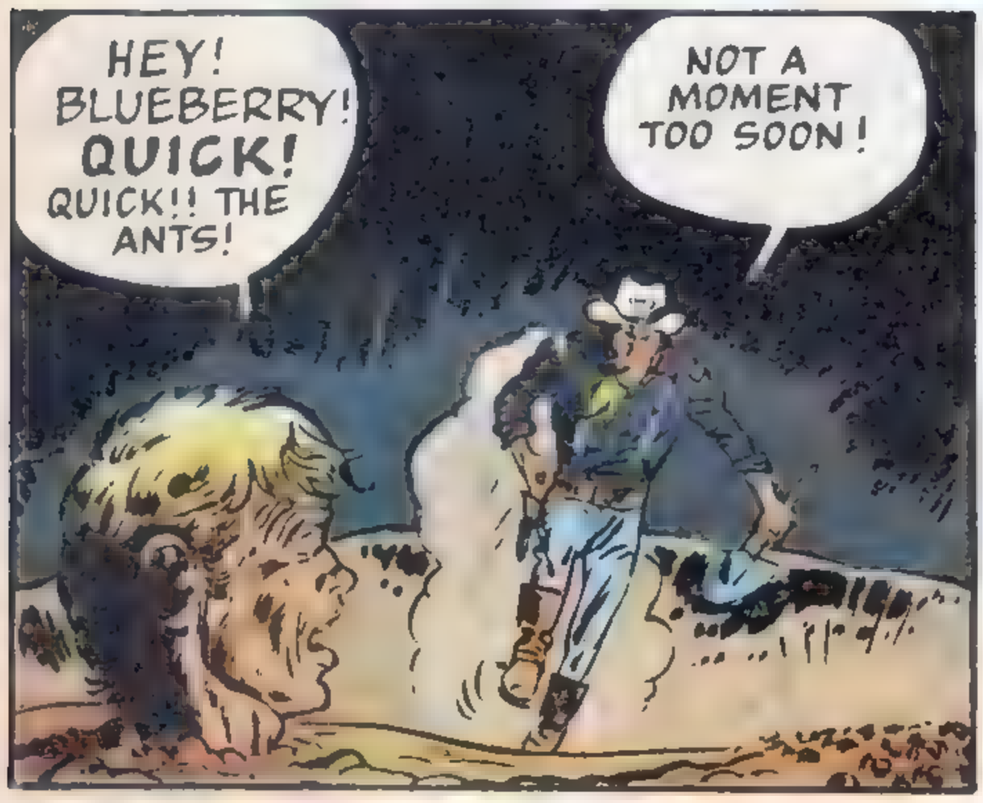
YAAAH YAA!
WOOAH!

GRRRR!
IT HAS KILLED A BRONCO! WE MUST GET IT!
NAHTOHE'S HORSE!

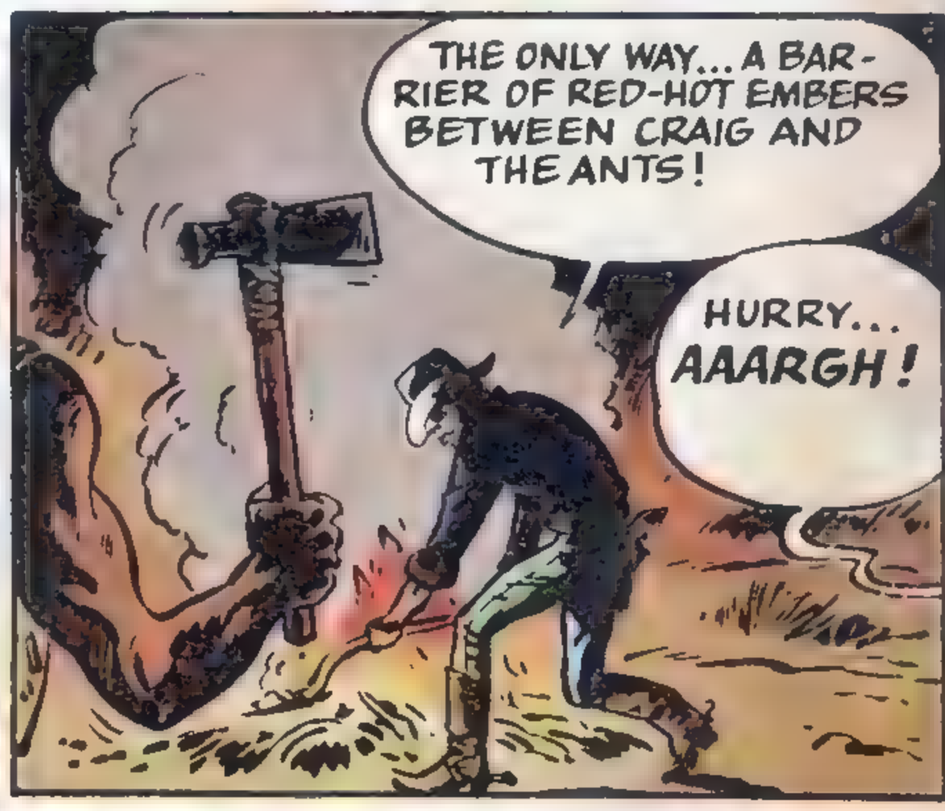
AFTER IT! IT WENT THAT WAY!
NAHTOHE WILL WAIT HERE!


A LITTLE LATER...


THANK GOD FOR THAT PUMA! NOW TO FREE CRAIG...

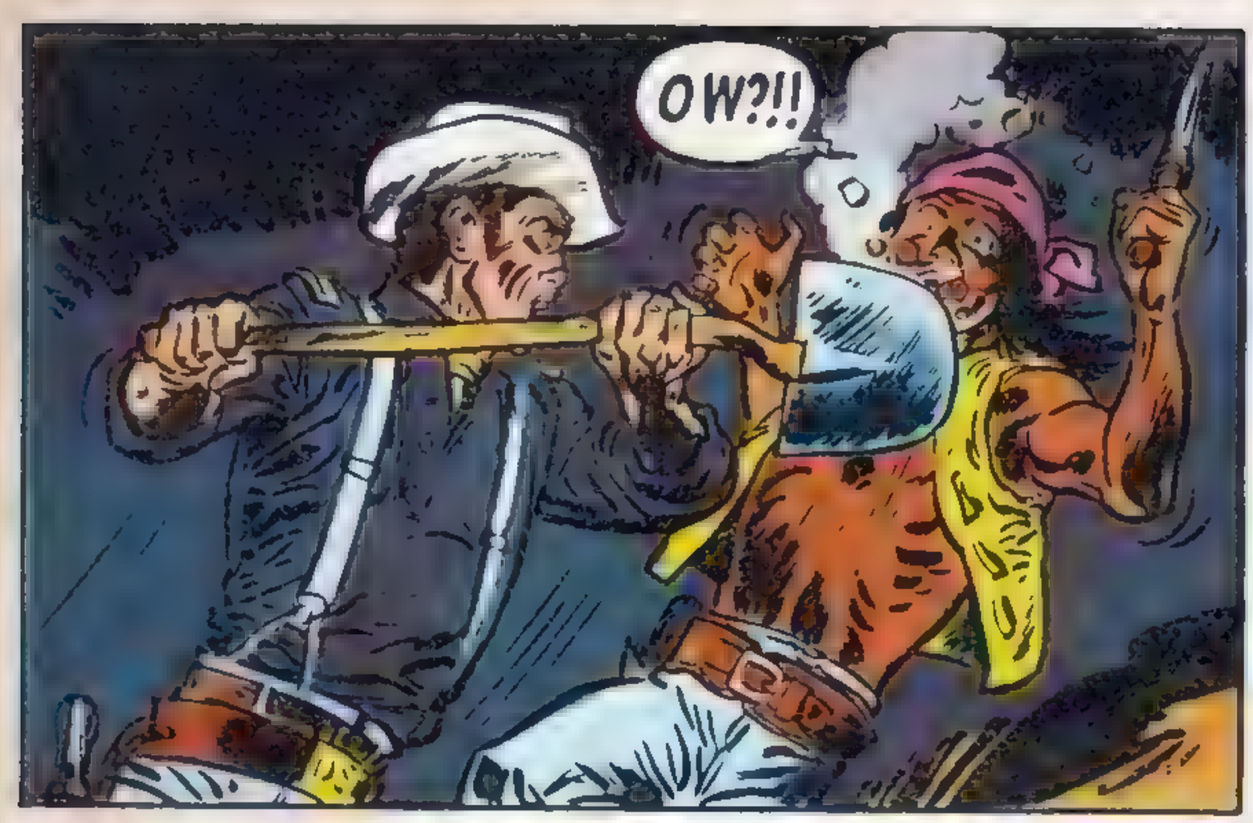

HEY! BLUEBERRY! QUICK! QUICK!! THE ANTS!
NOT A MOMENT TOO SOON!

I MUST STOP THEM... BUT HOW? AH! FIRE!


THE ONLY WAY... A BARRIER OF RED-HOT EMBERS BETWEEN CRAIG AND THE ANTS!
HURRY... AAARGH!

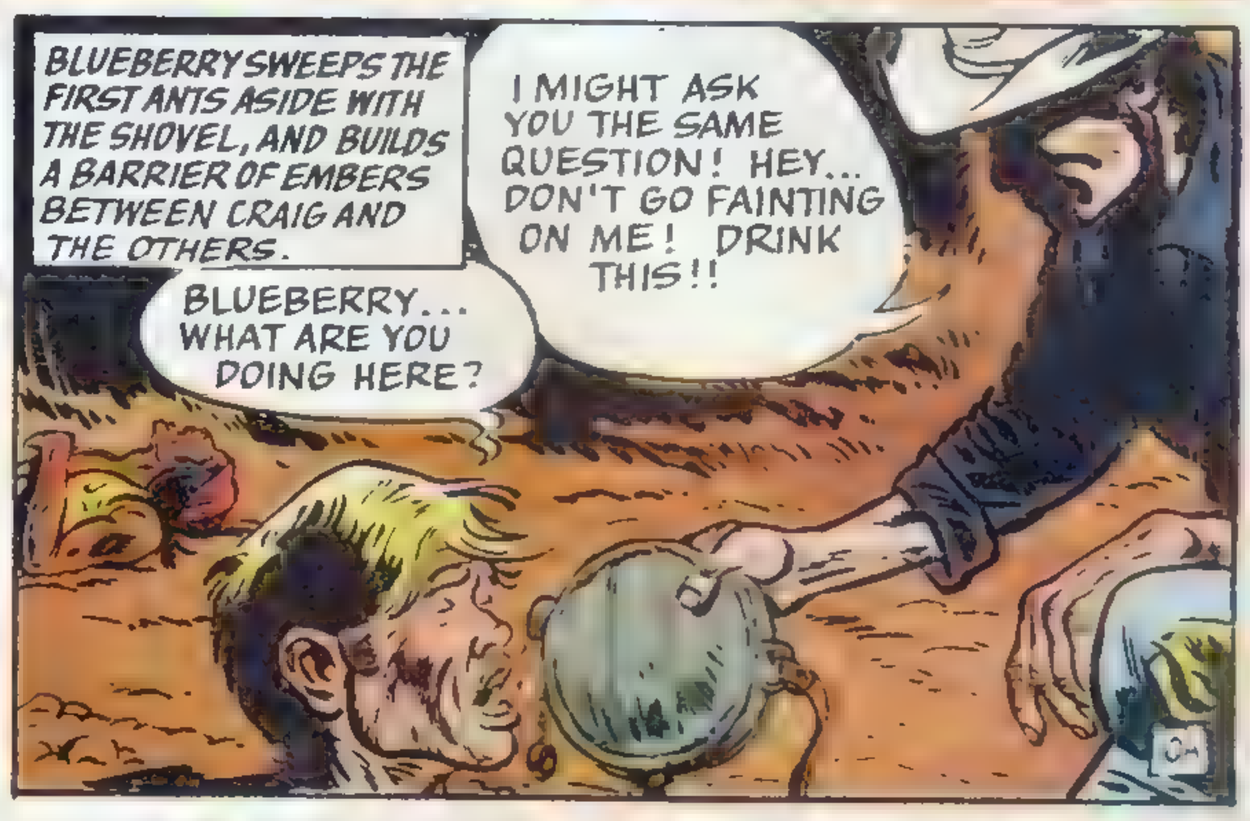
OKAY, I...
LOOK BEHIND YOU!

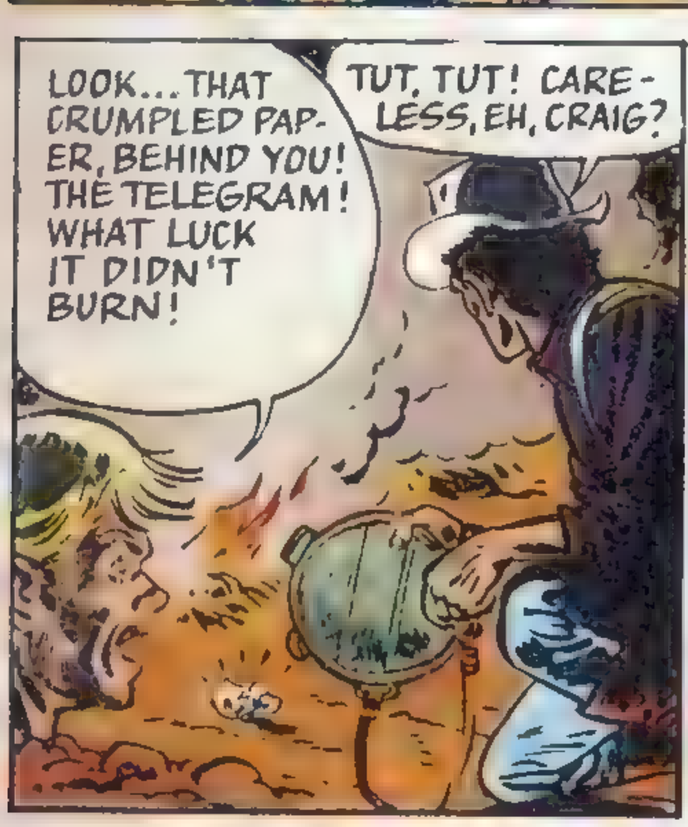
WHAT!?

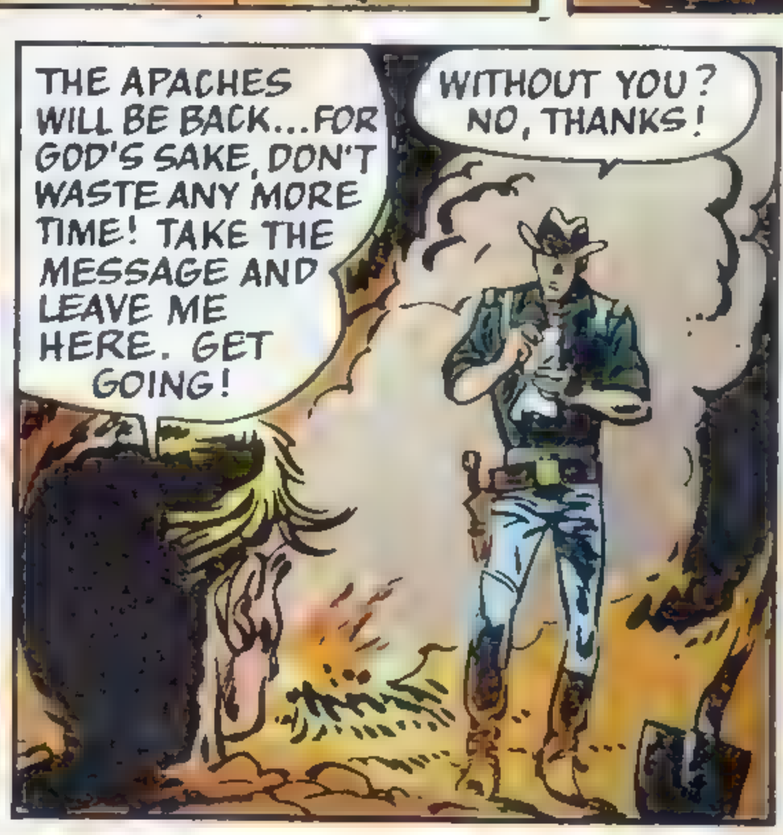

OW?!!

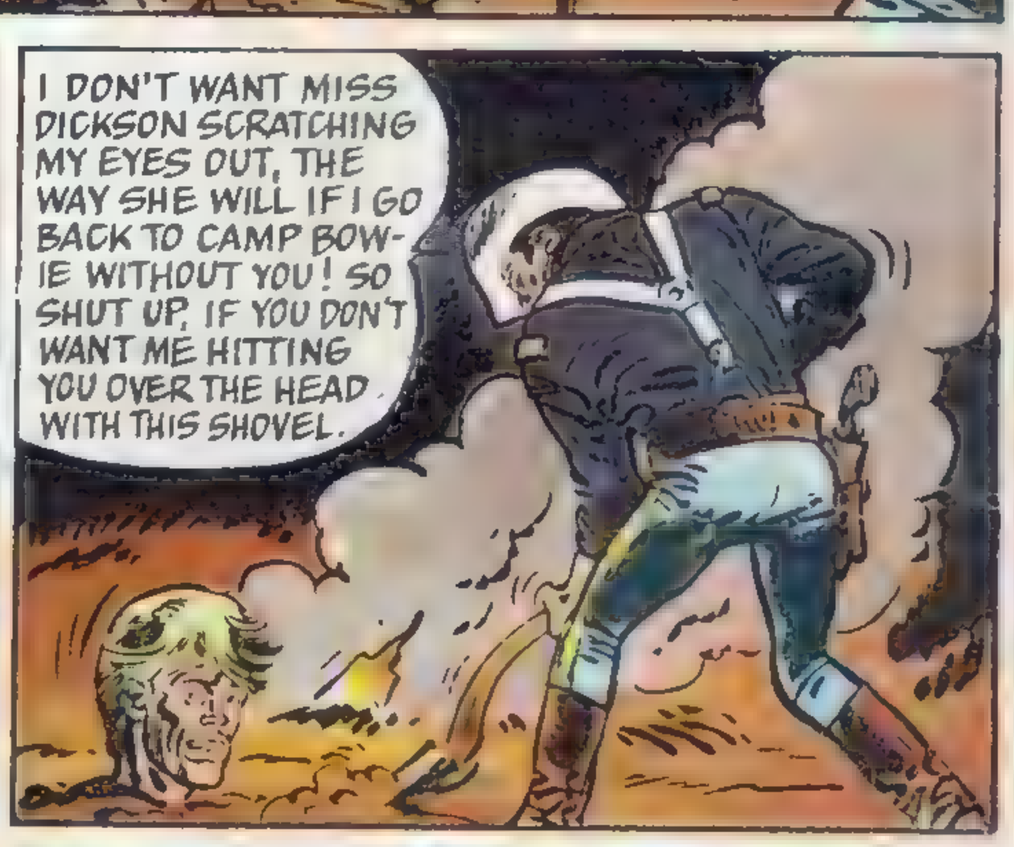
TOOK YOU BY SURPRISE, EH?
AAAHHH AARH!!

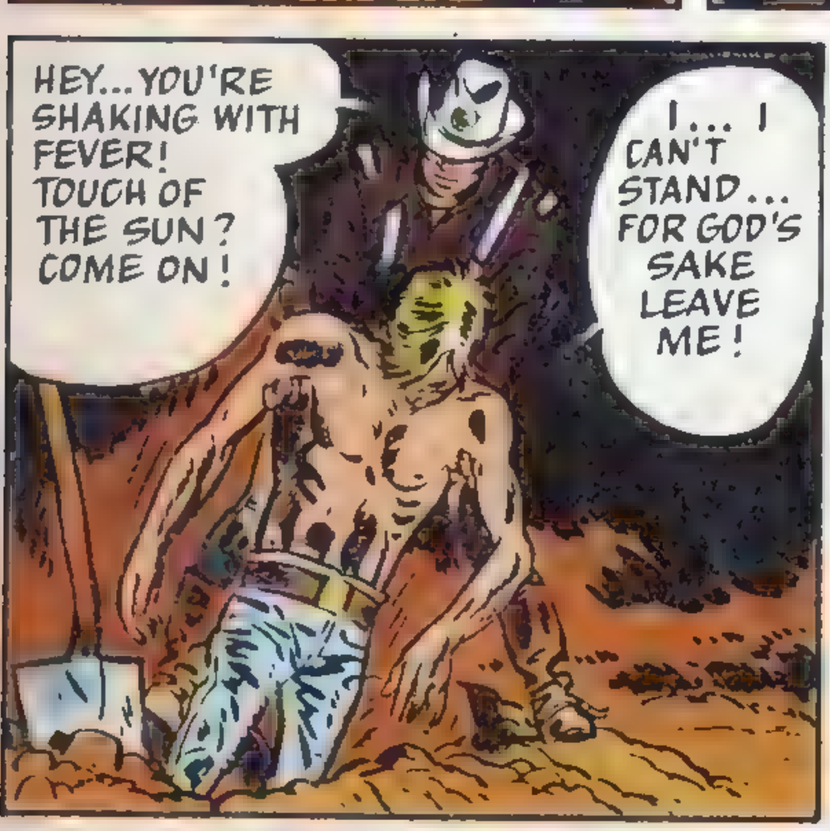
SWEET DREAMS!
DONG!

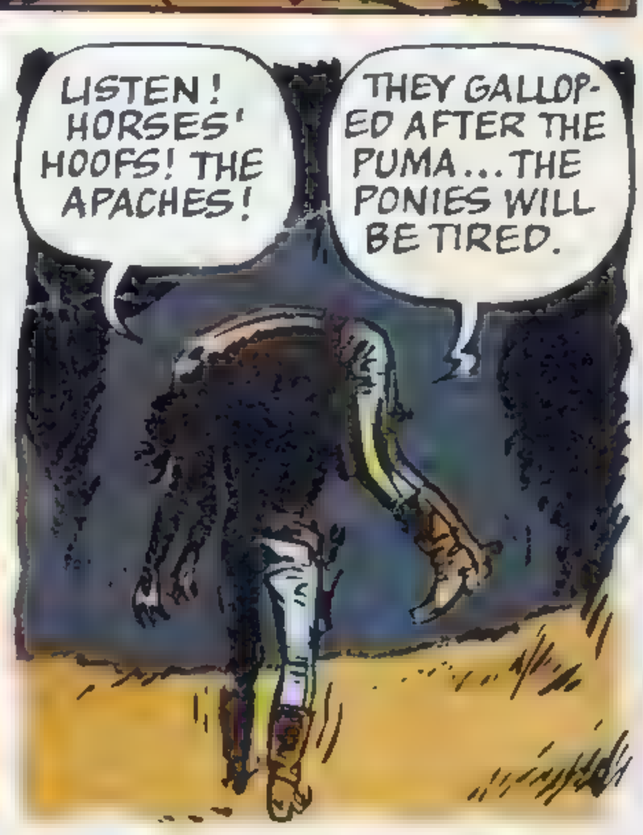

BLUEBERRY SWEEPS THE FIRST ANTS ASIDE WITH THE SHOVEL, AND BUILDS A BARRIER OF EMBERS BETWEEN CRAIG AND THE OTHERS.
BLUEBERRY... WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
I MIGHT ASK YOU THE SAME QUESTION! HEY... DON'T GO FAINTING ON ME! DRINK THIS!!

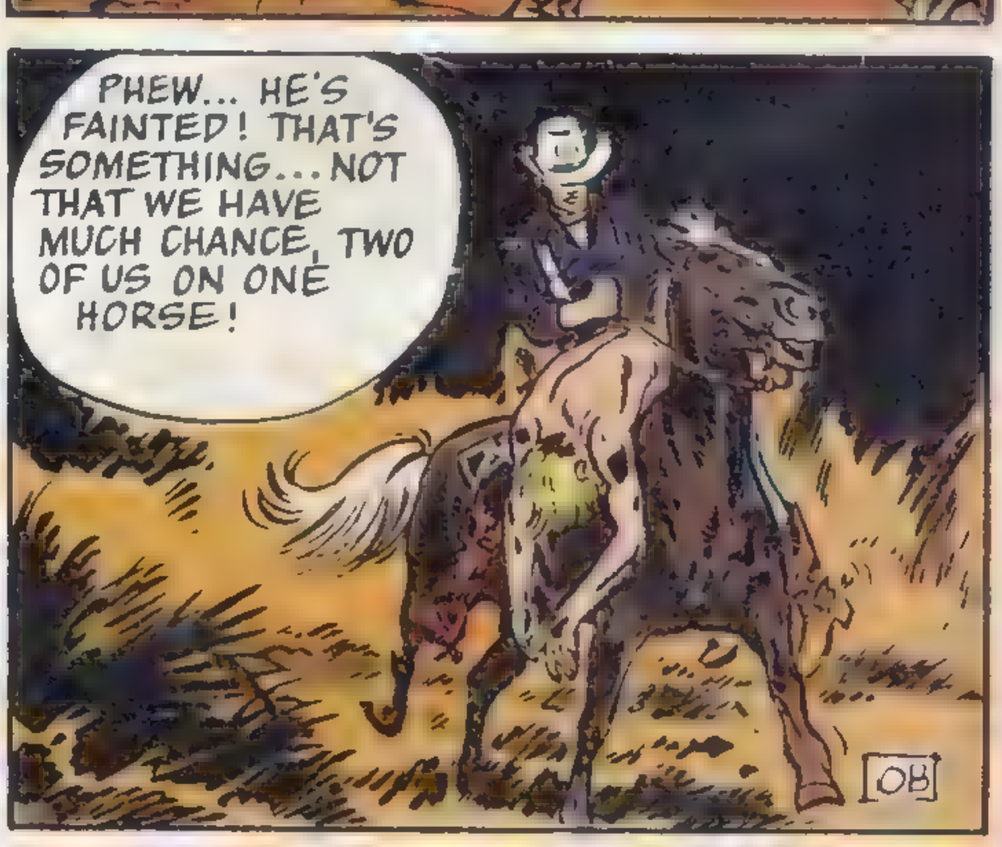

LOOK... THAT CRUMPLED PAPER, BEHIND YOU! THE TELEGRAM! WHAT LUCK IT DIDN'T BURN!
TUT, TUT! CARELESS, EH, CRAIG?

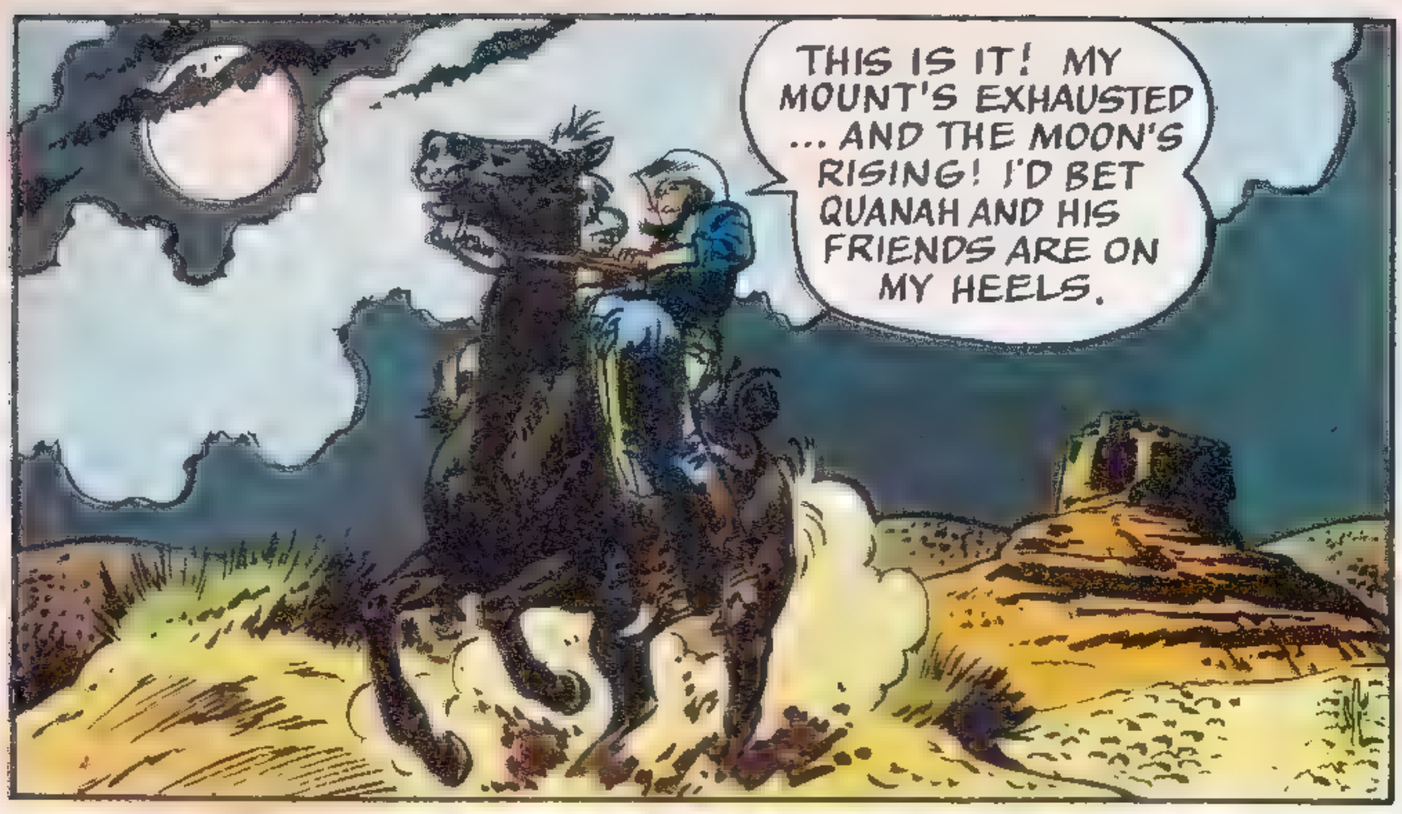

THE APACHES WILL BE BACK... FOR GOD'S SAKE, DON'T WASTE ANY MORE TIME! TAKE THE MESSAGE AND LEAVE ME HERE. GET GOING!
WITHOUT YOU? NO, THANKS!

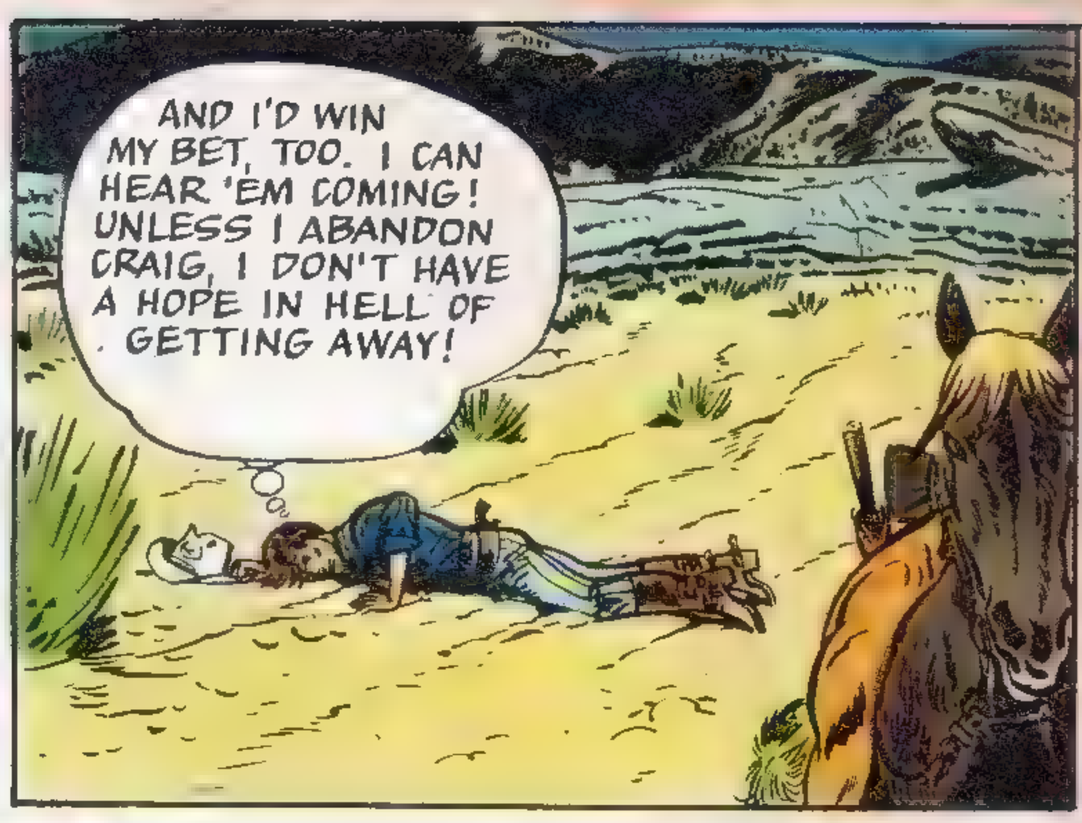

I DON'T WANT MISS DICKSON SCRATCHING MY EYES OUT, THE WAY SHE WILL IF I GO BACK TO CAMP BOWIE WITHOUT YOU! SO SHUT UP, IF YOU DON'T WANT ME HITTING YOU OVER THE HEAD WITH THIS SHOVEL.

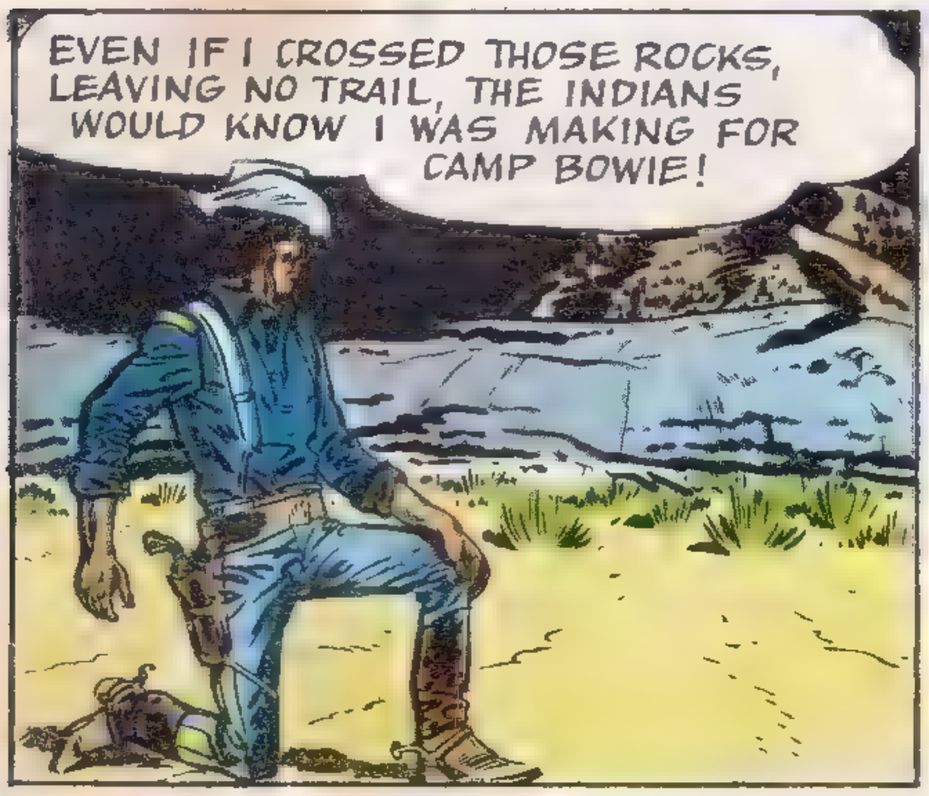

HEY... YOU'RE SHAKING WITH FEVER! TOUCH OF THE SUN? COME ON!
I... I CAN'T STAND... FOR GOD'S SAKE LEAVE ME!

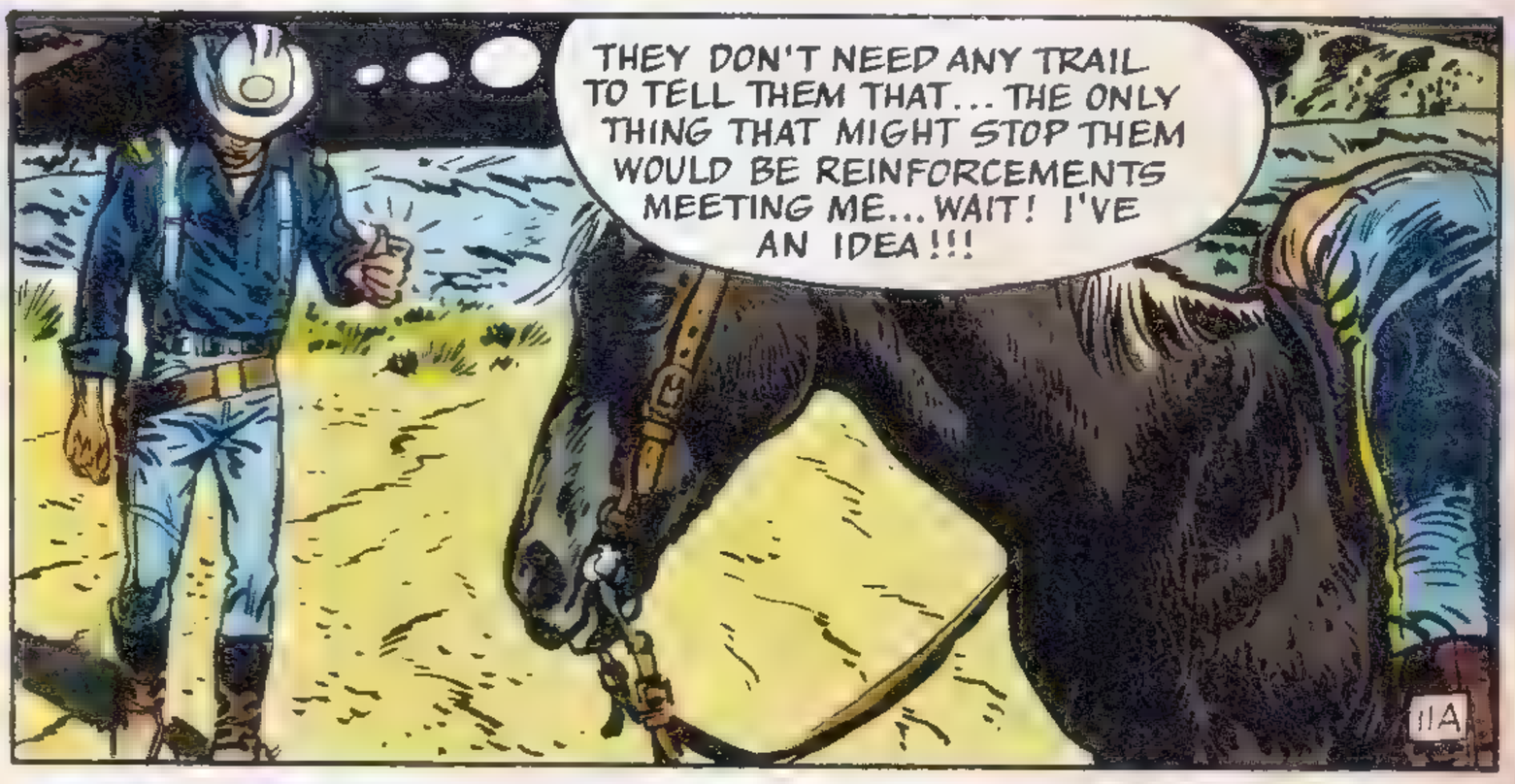

LISTEN! HORSES' HOOFS! THE APACHES!
THEY GALLOPED AFTER THE PUMA... THE PONIES WILL BE TIRED.

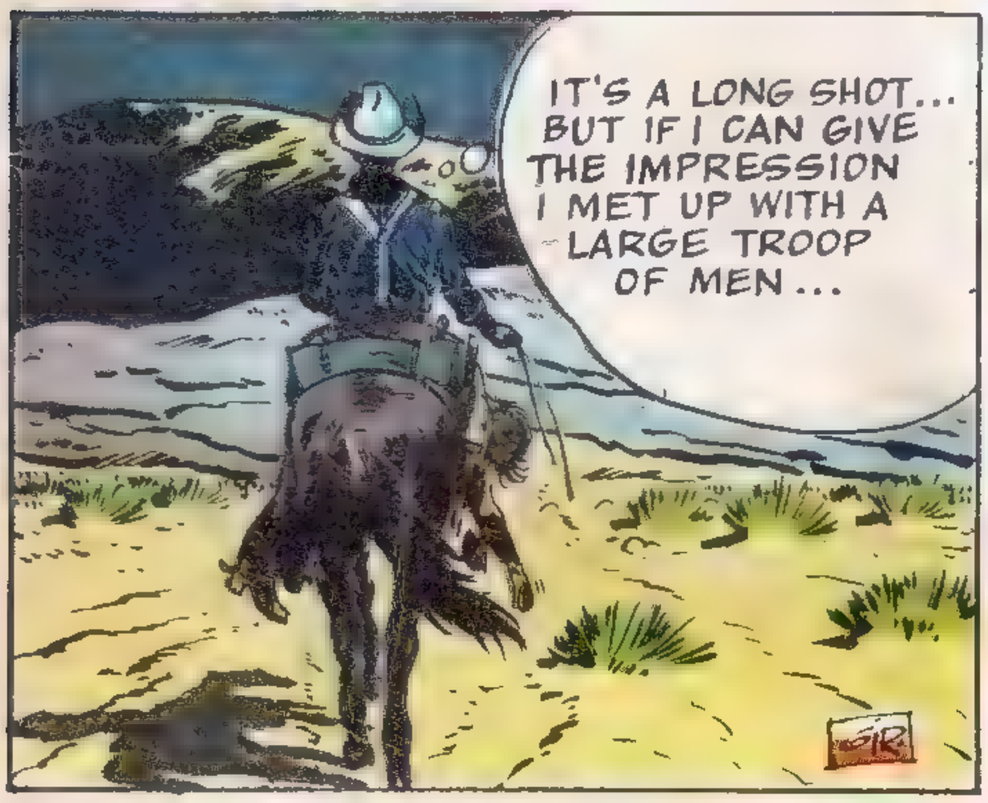

PHEW... HE'S FAINTED! THAT'S SOMETHING... NOT THAT WE HAVE MUCH CHANCE, TWO OF US ON ONE HORSE!
OB


THIS IS IT! MY MOUNT'S EXHAUSTED ... AND THE MOON'S RISING! I'D BET QUANAH AND HIS FRIENDS ARE ON MY HEELS.

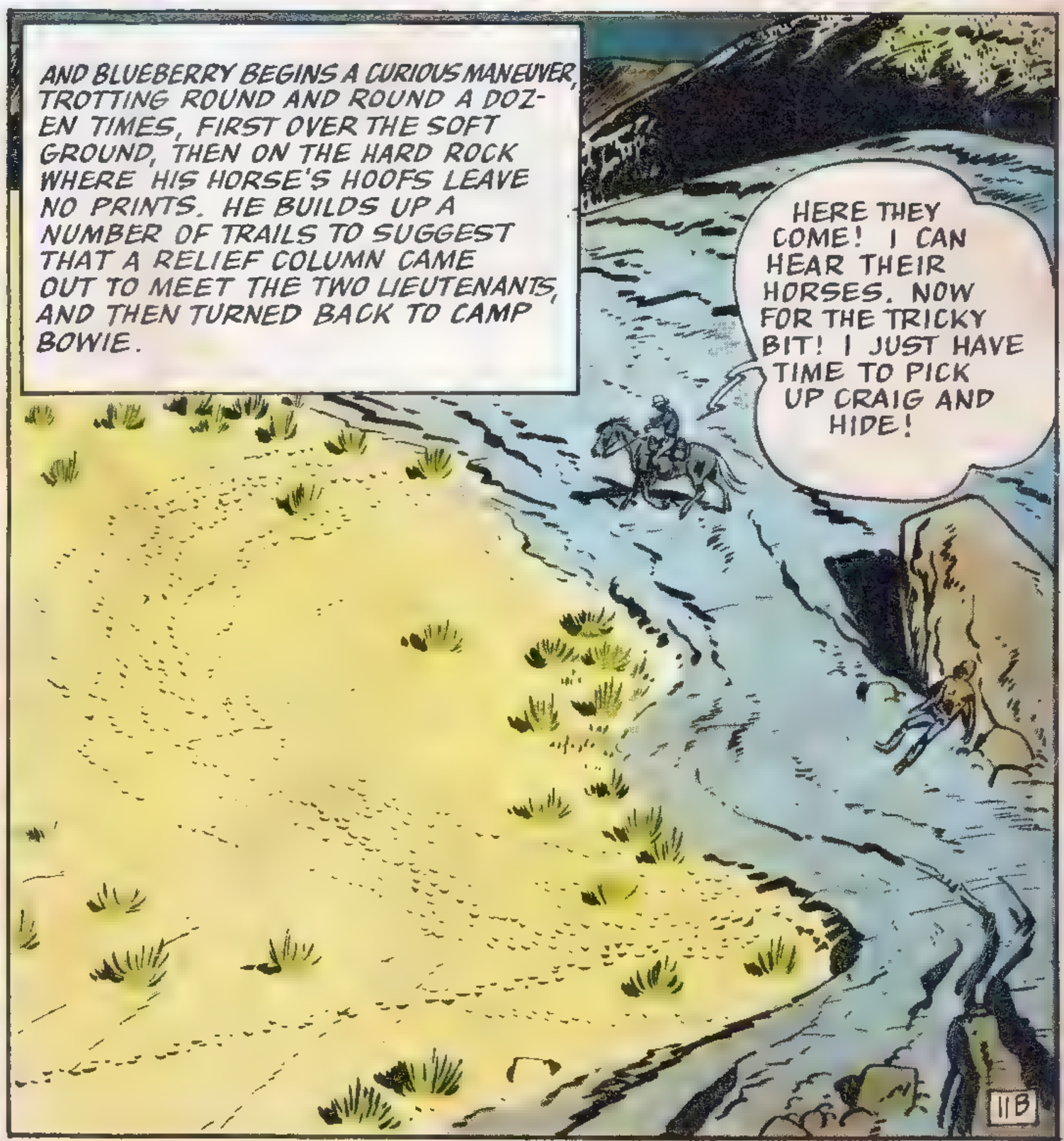

AND I'D WIN MY BET, TOO. I CAN HEAR 'EM COMING! UNLESS I ABANDON CRAIG, I DON'T HAVE A HOPE IN HELL OF GETTING AWAY!

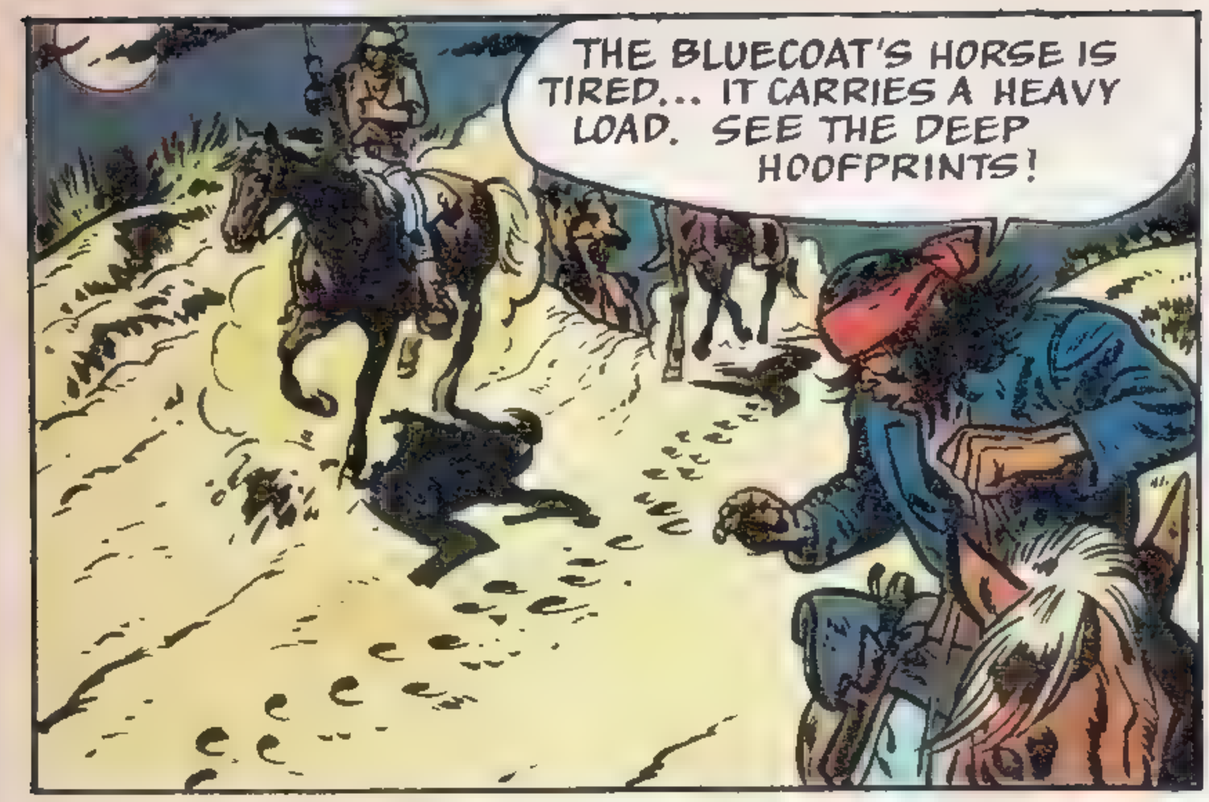

EVEN IF I CROSSED THOSE ROCKS, LEAVING NO TRAIL, THE INDIANS WOULD KNOW I WAS MAKING FOR CAMP BOWIE!

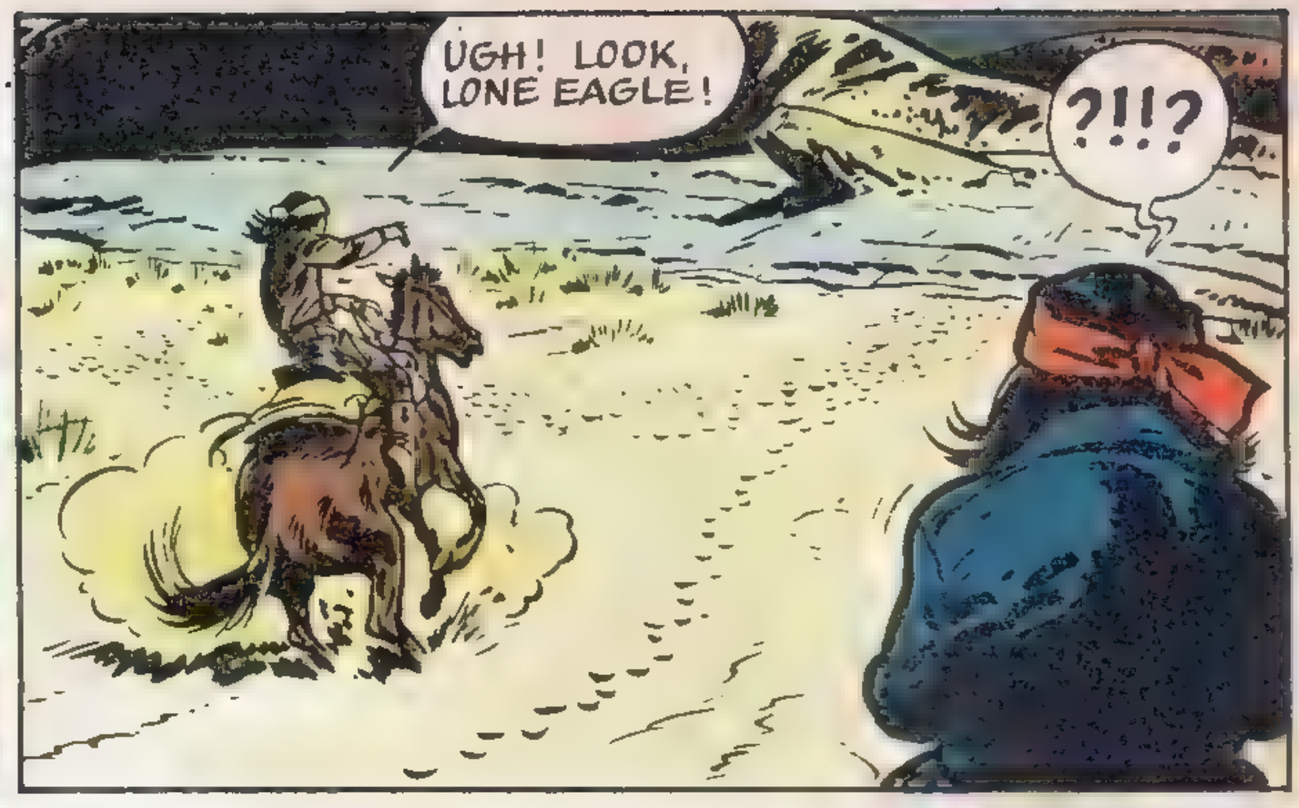

THEY DON'T NEED ANY TRAIL TO TELL THEM THAT... THE ONLY THING THAT MIGHT STOP THEM WOULD BE REINFORCEMENTS MEETING ME... WAIT! I'VE AN IDEA!!!
11A


IT'S A LONG SHOT... BUT IF I CAN GIVE THE IMPRESSION I MET UP WITH A LARGE TROOP OF MEN ...

... SO LARGE WE COULD JUST WALK OUR HORSES BACK TO CAMP... WELL, BETTER LAY A FALSE TRAIL TO PROVE IT!

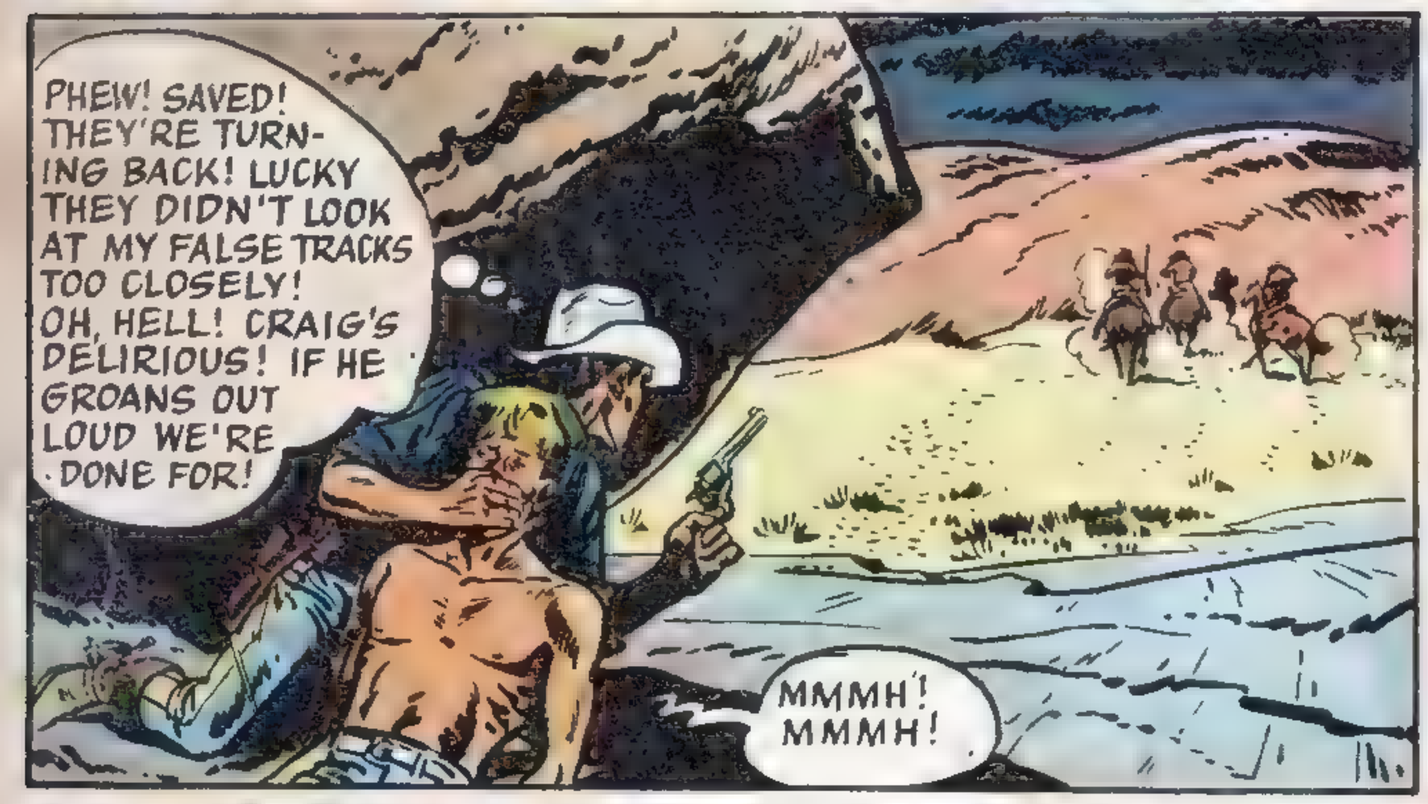

AND BLUEBERRY BEGINS A CURIOUS MANEUVER, TROTTING ROUND AND ROUND A DOZEN TIMES, FIRST OVER THE SOFT GROUND, THEN ON THE HARD ROCK WHERE HIS HORSE'S HOOFS LEAVE NO PRINTS. HE BUILDS UP A NUMBER OF TRAILS TO SUGGEST THAT A RELIEF COLUMN CAME OUT TO MEET THE TWO LIEUTENANTS, AND THEN TURNED BACK TO CAMP BOWIE.
HERE THEY COME! I CAN HEAR THEIR HORSES. NOW FOR THE TRICKY BIT! I JUST HAVE TIME TO PICK UP CRAIG AND HIDE!
11B

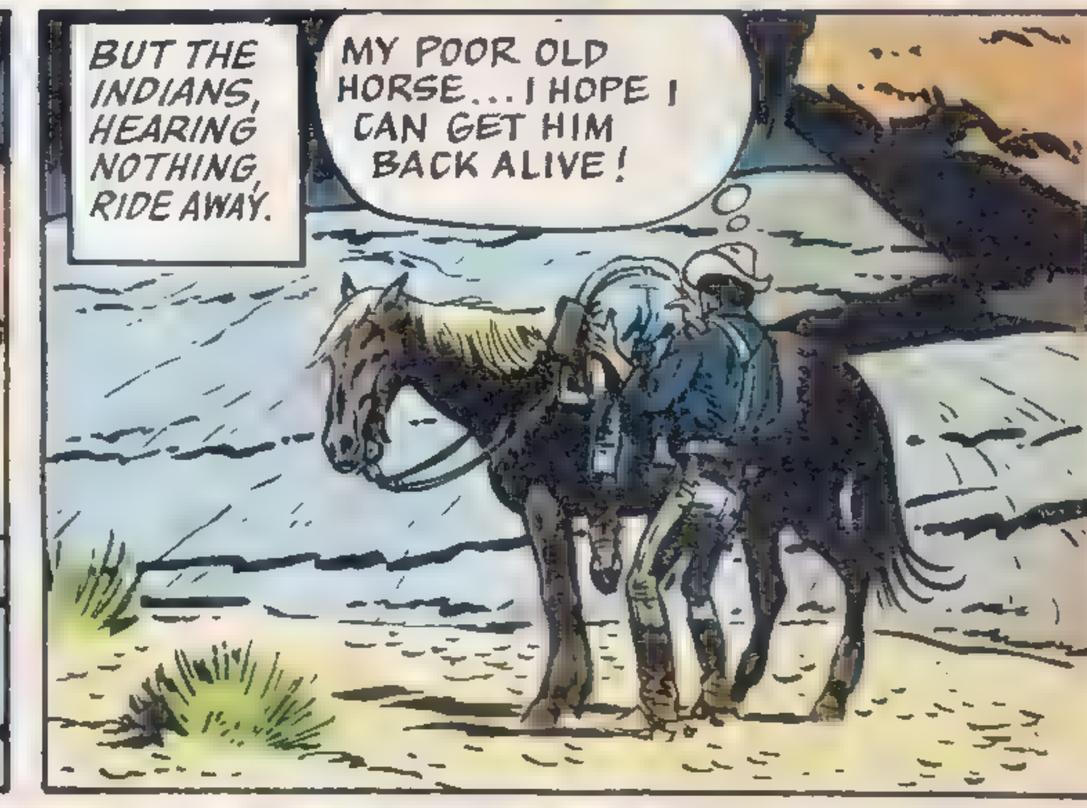

THE BLUECOAT'S HORSE IS TIRED... IT CARRIES A HEAVY LOAD. SEE THE DEEP HOOFPRINTS!

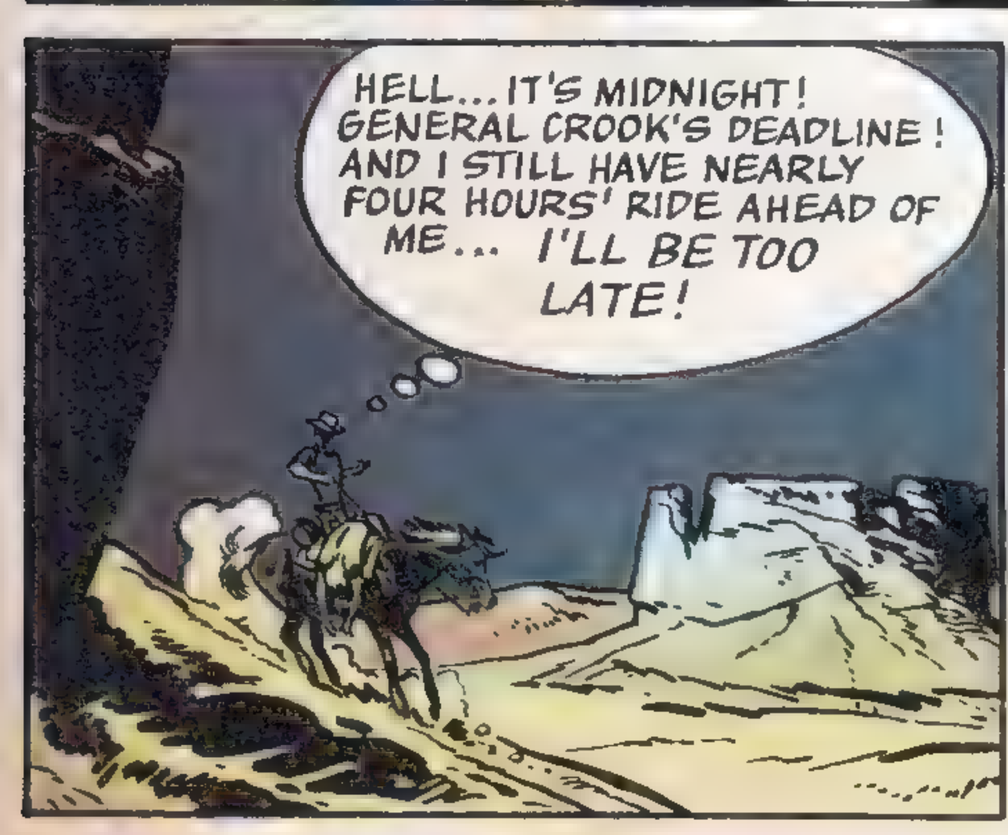

UGH! LOOK, LONE EAGLE!
?!!?

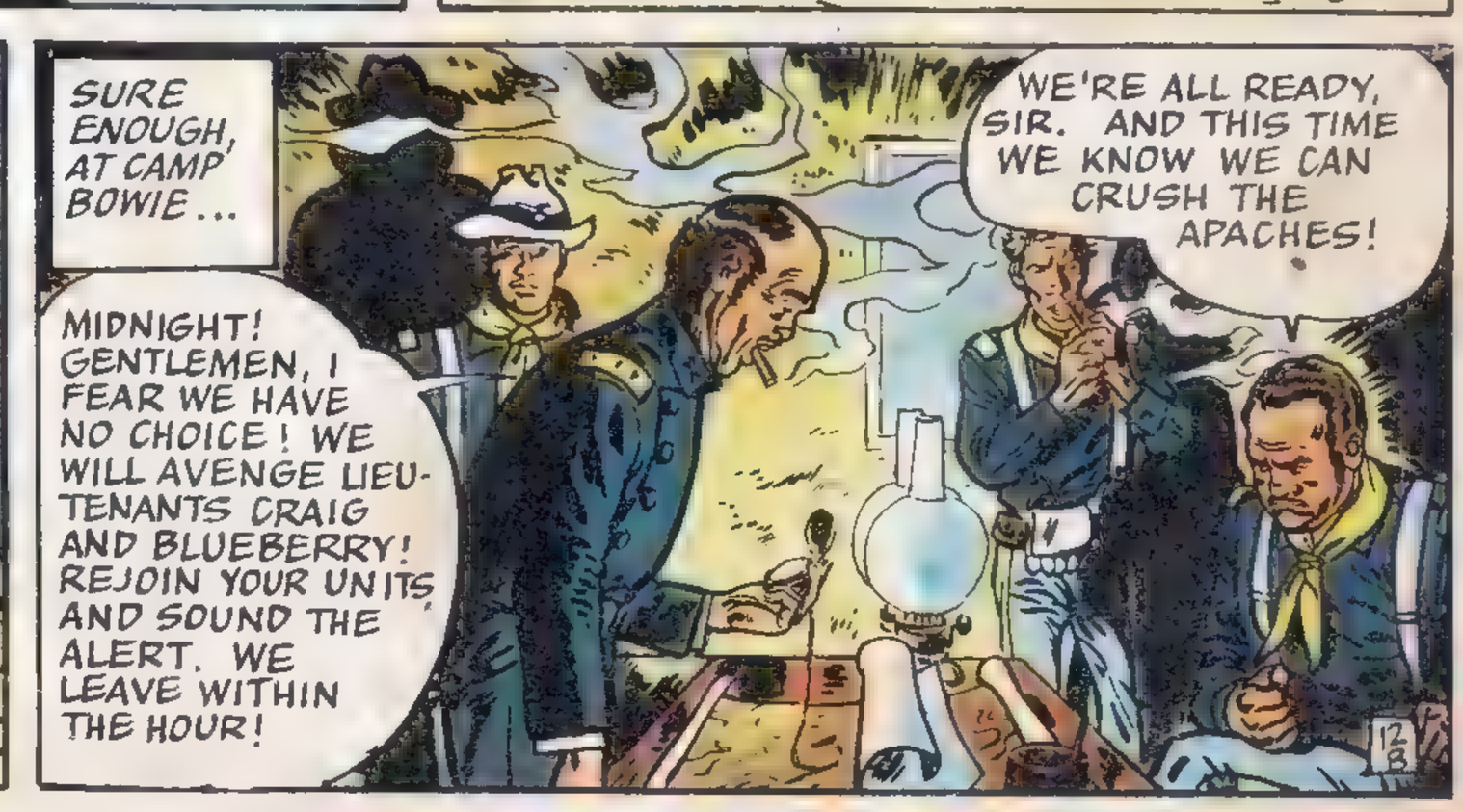
MORE BLUECOATS JOINED THE TWO MEN. MANY MORE! THE TRAILS ARE FRESH. WITHOUT NAHTOHE, IT IS THREE TO ONE!
DO MY BROTHERS HAVE THE HEARTS OF SQUAWS? THE SOLDIERS THINK THEY ARE SAFE BECAUSE THEY OUTNUMBER US... BUT NIGHT IS ON OUR SIDE!

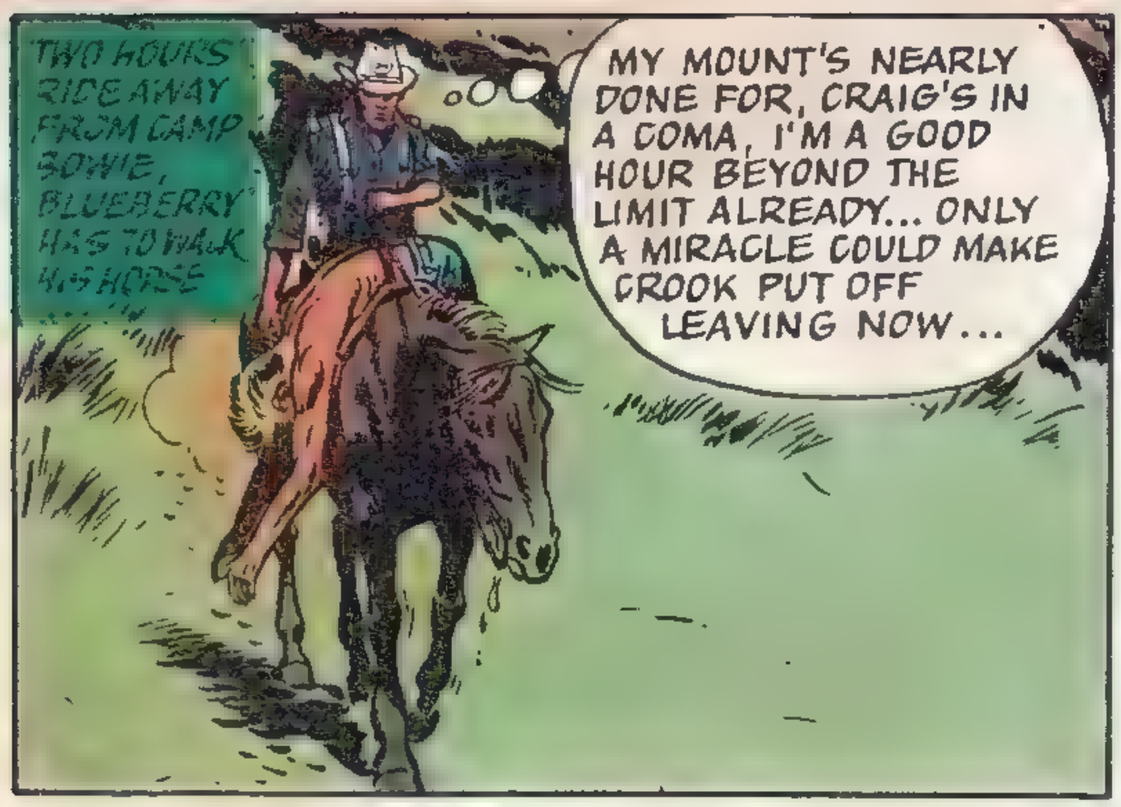
LONE EAGLE IS BRAVE, BUT IN HIS HATRED OF THE WHITE MAN HE FORGETS CAUTION! THE BLUECOATS WILL BE ON THEIR GUARD!
12A

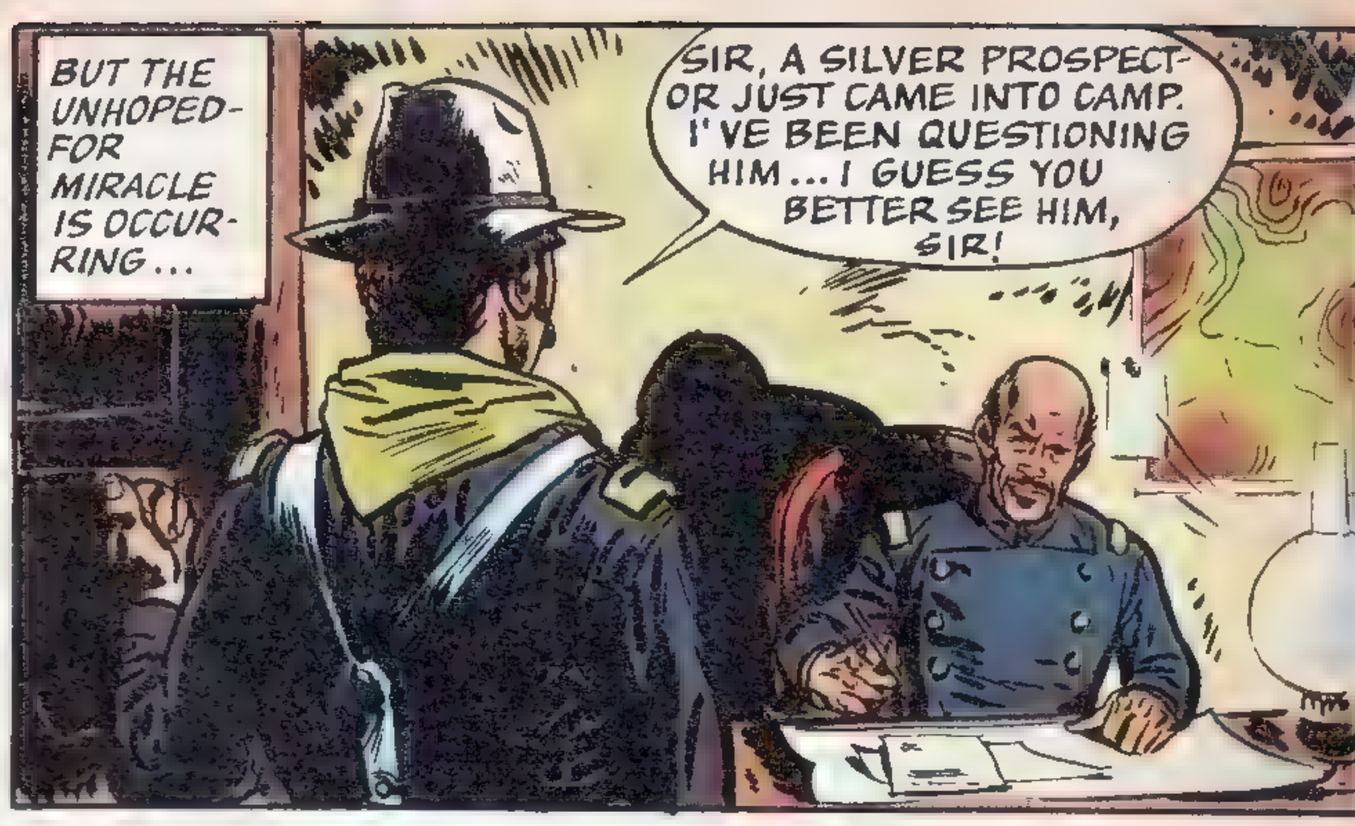

PHEW! SAVED! THEY'RE TURNING BACK! LUCKY THEY DIDN'T LOOK AT MY FALSE TRACKS TOO CLOSELY! OH, HELL! CRAIG'S DELIRIOUS! IF HE GROANS OUT LOUD WE'RE DONE FOR!
MMMH! MMMH!

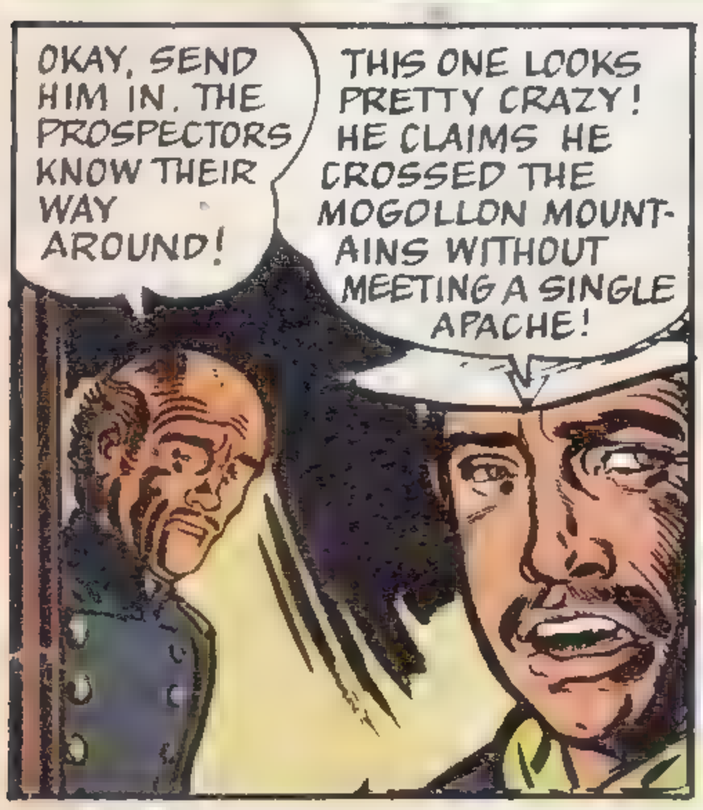

BUT THE INDIANS, HEARING NOTHING, RIDE AWAY.
MY POOR OLD HORSE... I HOPE I CAN GET HIM BACK ALIVE!

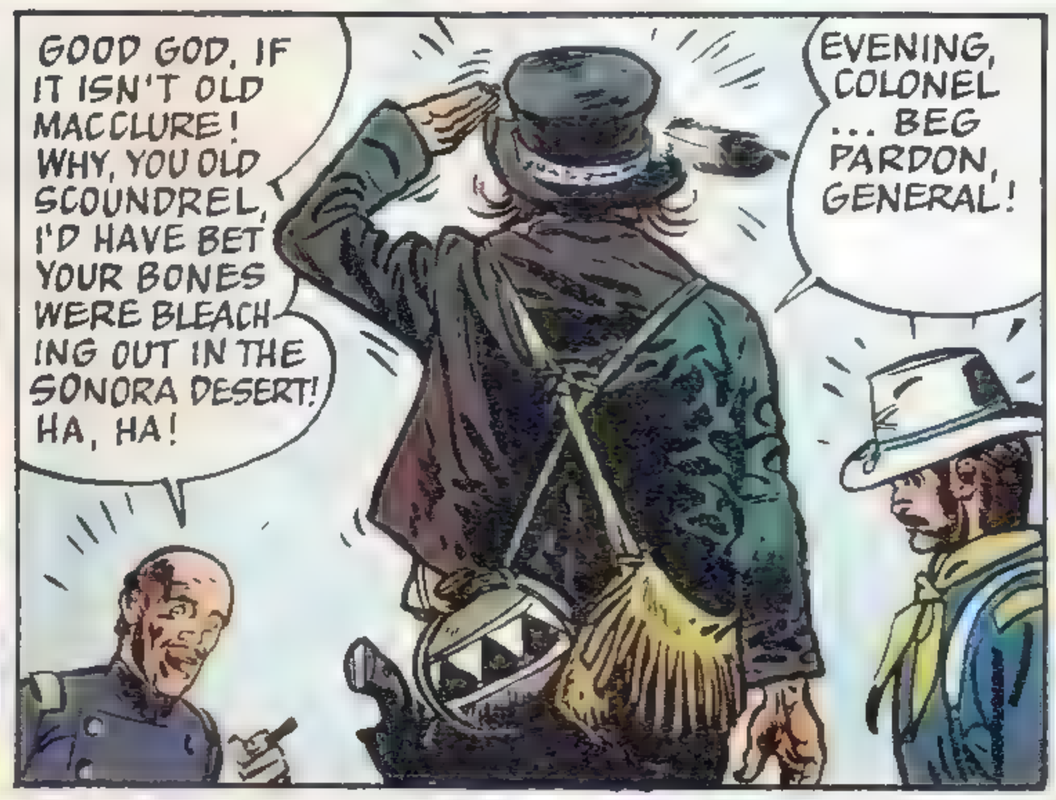

HELL... IT'S MIDNIGHT! GENERAL CROOK'S DEADLINE! AND I STILL HAVE NEARLY FOUR HOURS' RIDE AHEAD OF ME... I'LL BE TOO LATE!


SURE ENOUGH, AT CAMP BOWIE...
MIDNIGHT! GENTLEMEN, I FEAR WE HAVE NO CHOICE! WE WILL AVENGE LIEUTENANTS CRAIG AND BLUEBERRY! REJOIN YOUR UNITS AND SOUND THE ALERT. WE LEAVE WITHIN THE HOUR!
WE'RE ALL READY, SIR. AND THIS TIME WE KNOW WE CAN CRUSH THE APACHES!
12B

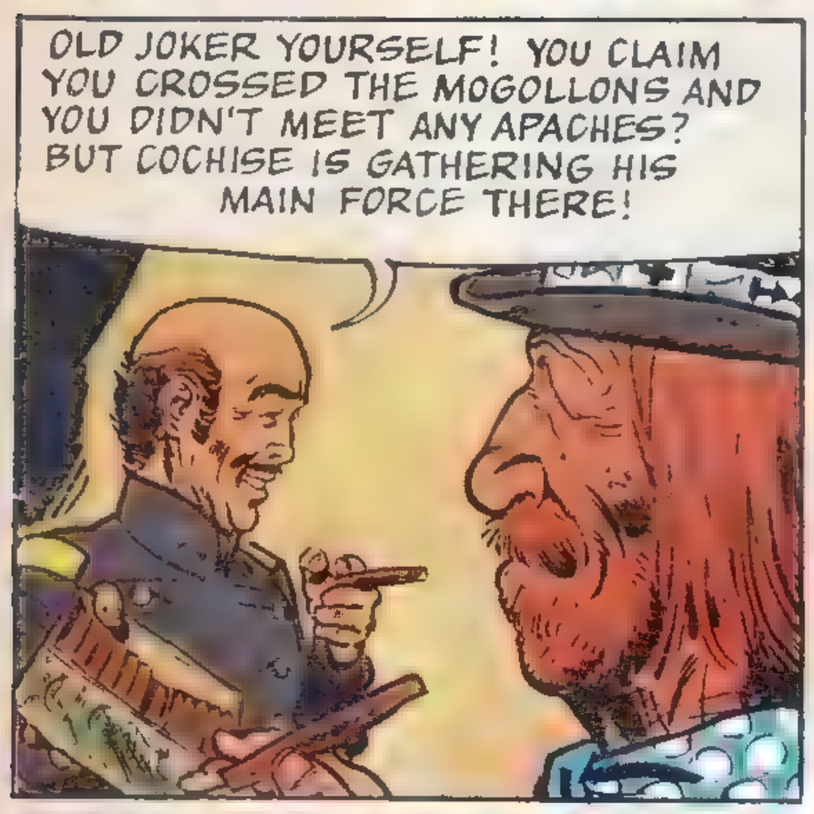

TWO HOURS RIDE AWAY FROM CAMP BOWIE, BLUEBERRY HAS TO WALK HIS HORSE
MY MOUNT'S NEARLY DONE FOR, CRAIG'S IN A COMA, I'M A GOOD HOUR BEYOND THE LIMIT ALREADY... ONLY A MIRACLE COULD MAKE CROOK PUT OFF LEAVING NOW...

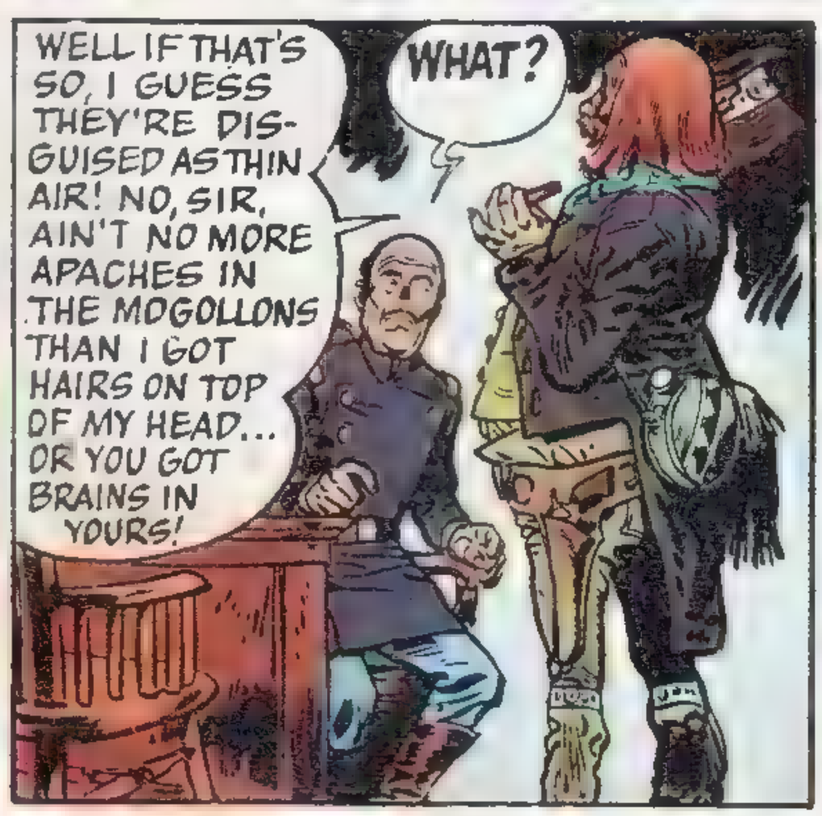

BUT THE UNHOPED-FOR MIRACLE IS OCCURRING...
SIR, A SILVER PROSPECTOR JUST CAME INTO CAMP. I'VE BEEN QUESTIONING HIM... I GUESS YOU BETTER SEE HIM, SIR!

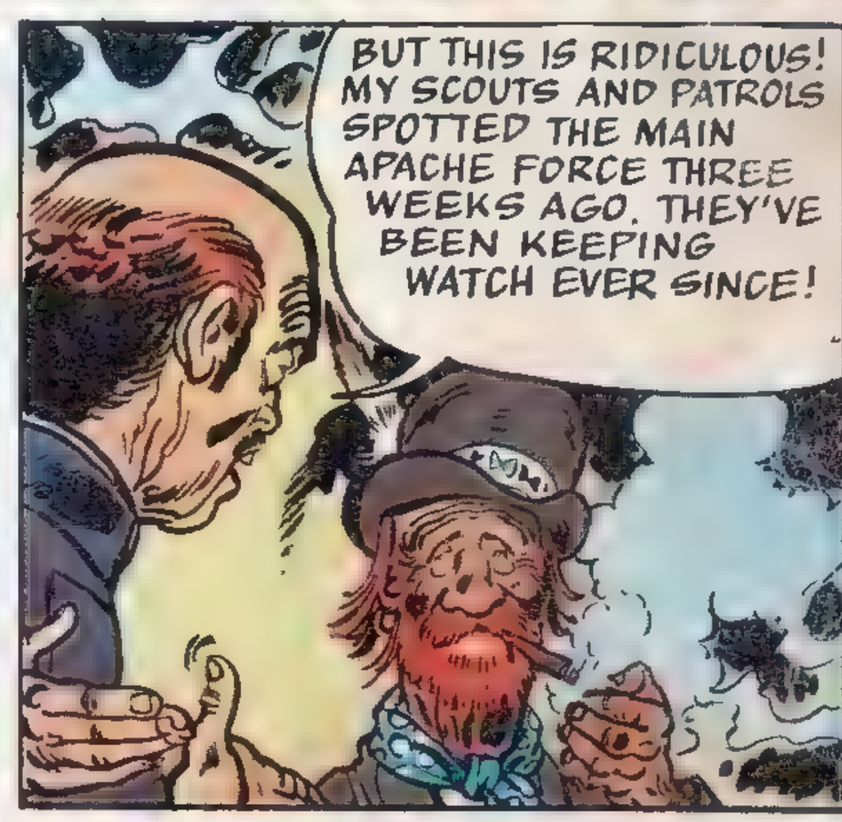

OKAY, SEND HIM IN. THE PROSPECTORS KNOW THEIR WAY AROUND!
THIS ONE LOOKS PRETTY CRAZY! HE CLAIMS HE CROSSED THE MOGOLLON MOUNTAINS WITHOUT MEETING A SINGLE APACHE!

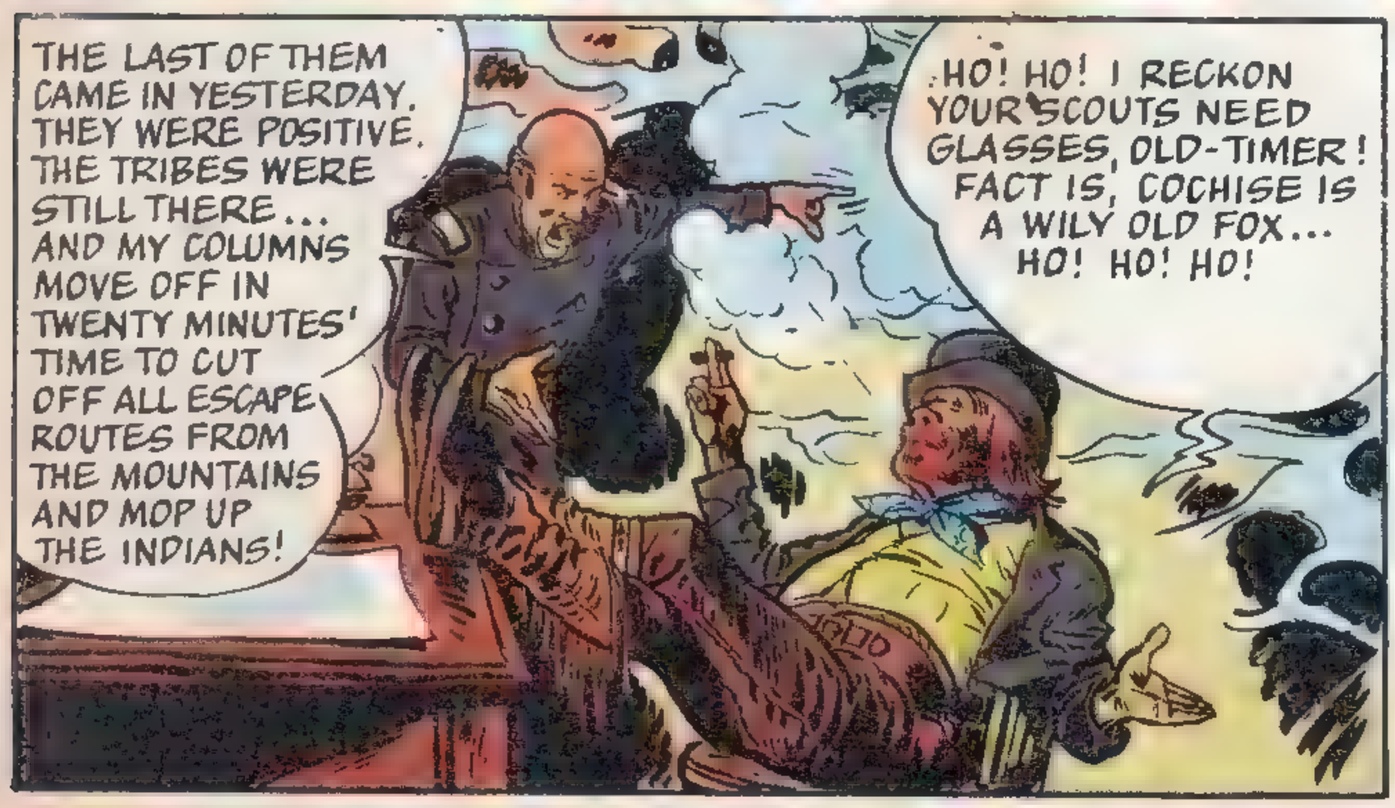

GOOD GOD, IF IT ISN'T OLD MACCLURE! WHY, YOU OLD SCOUNDREL, I'D HAVE BET YOUR BONES WERE BLEACHING OUT IN THE SONORA DESERT! HA, HA!
EVENING, COLONEL ... BEG PARDON, GENERAL!

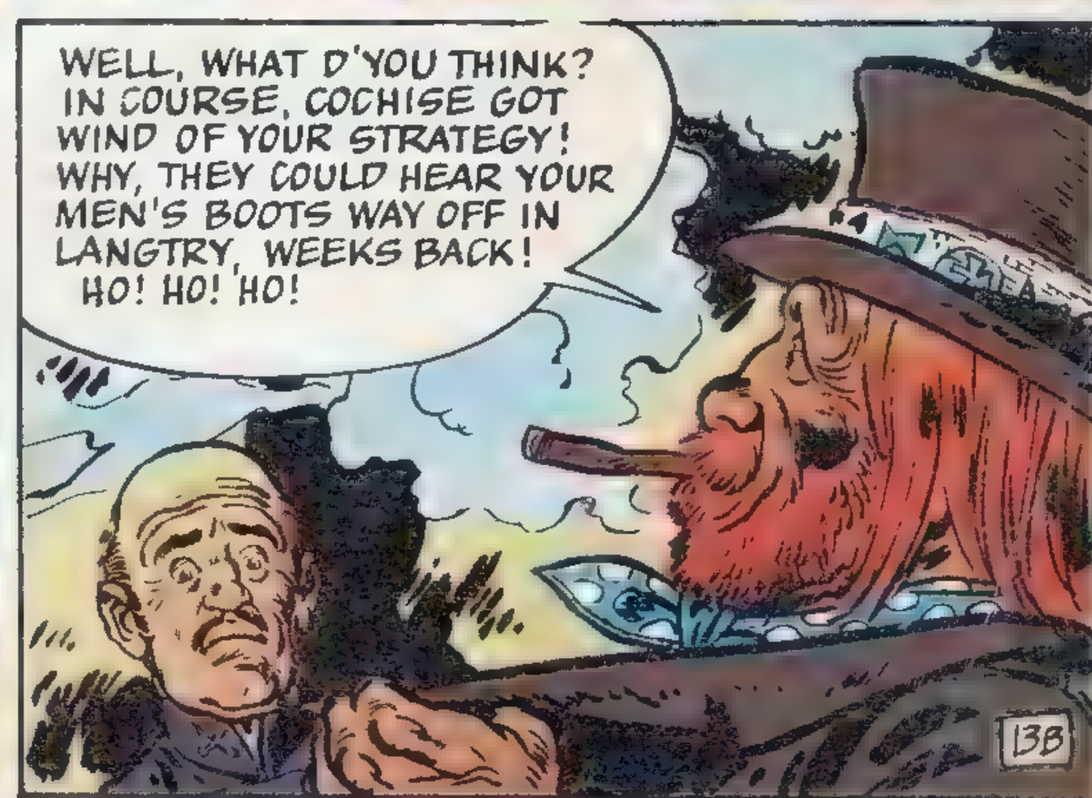
SO YOU'RE A GENERAL NOW, YOU OLD JOKER? YOU KNOW DARN WELL MY CARCASS IS TOO TOUGH FOR THEM VULTURES!
13A

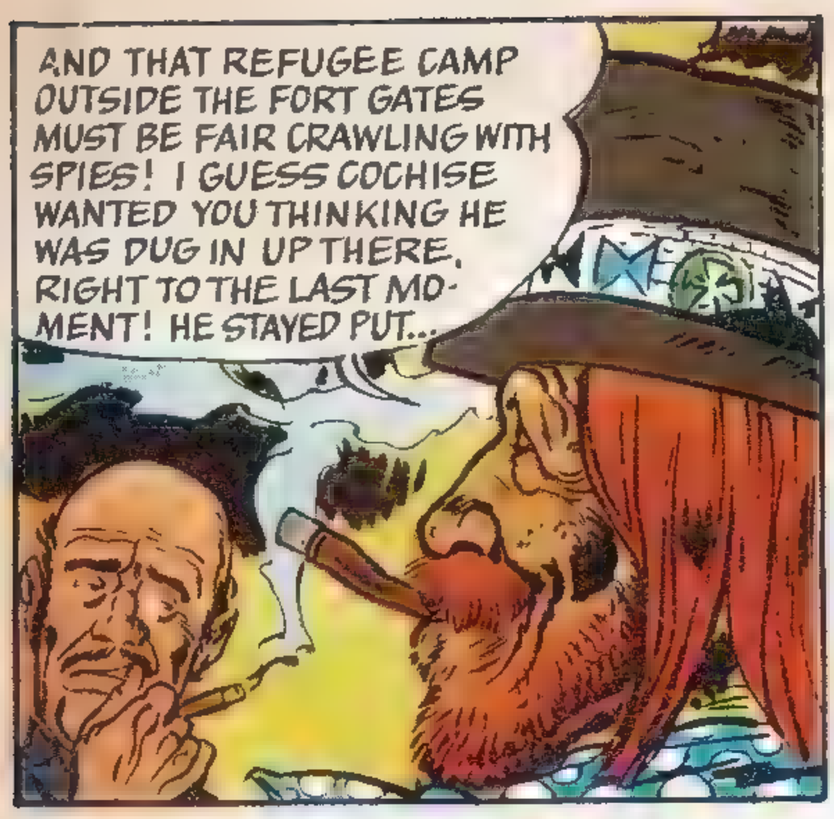

OLD JOKER YOURSELF! YOU CLAIM YOU CROSSED THE MOGOLLONS AND YOU DIDN'T MEET ANY APACHES? BUT COCHISE IS GATHERING HIS MAIN FORCE THERE!

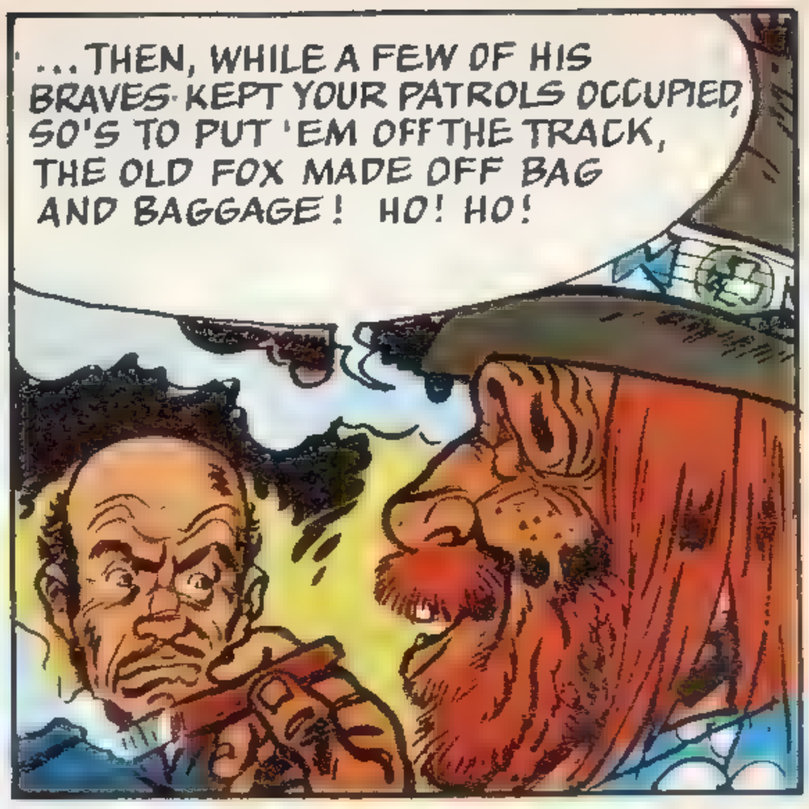

WELL IF THAT'S SO, I GUESS THEY'RE DISGUISED AS THIN AIR! NO, SIR, AIN'T NO MORE APACHES IN THE MOGOLLONS THAN I GOT HAIRS ON TOP OF MY HEAD... OR YOU GOT BRAINS IN YOURS!
WHAT?

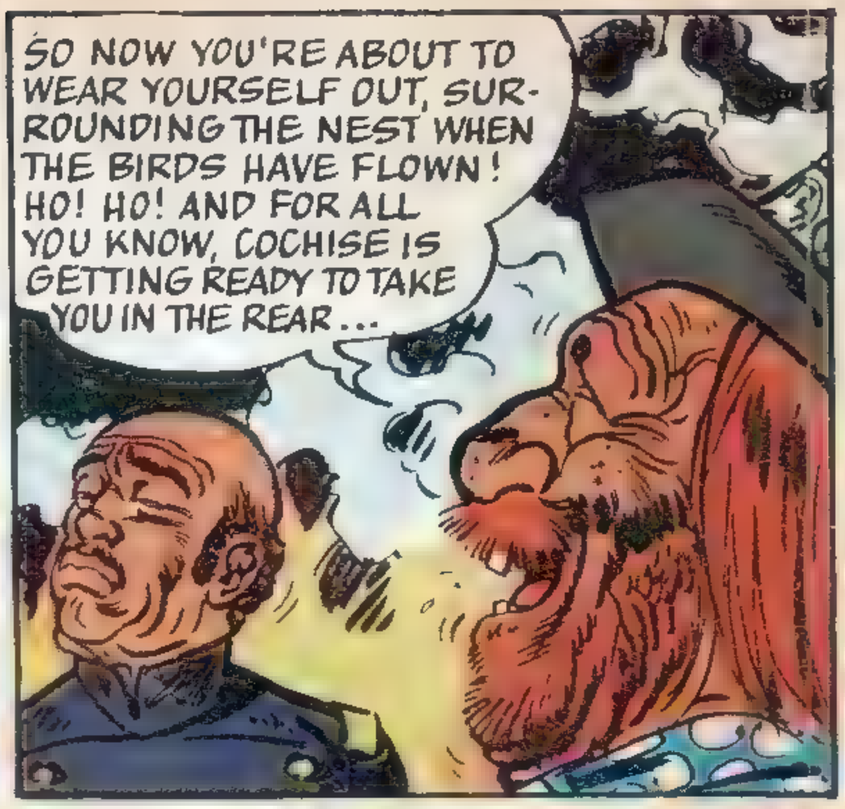

BUT THIS IS RIDICULOUS! MY SCOUTS AND PATROLS SPOTTED THE MAIN APACHE FORCE THREE WEEKS AGO. THEY'VE BEEN KEEPING WATCH EVER SINCE!

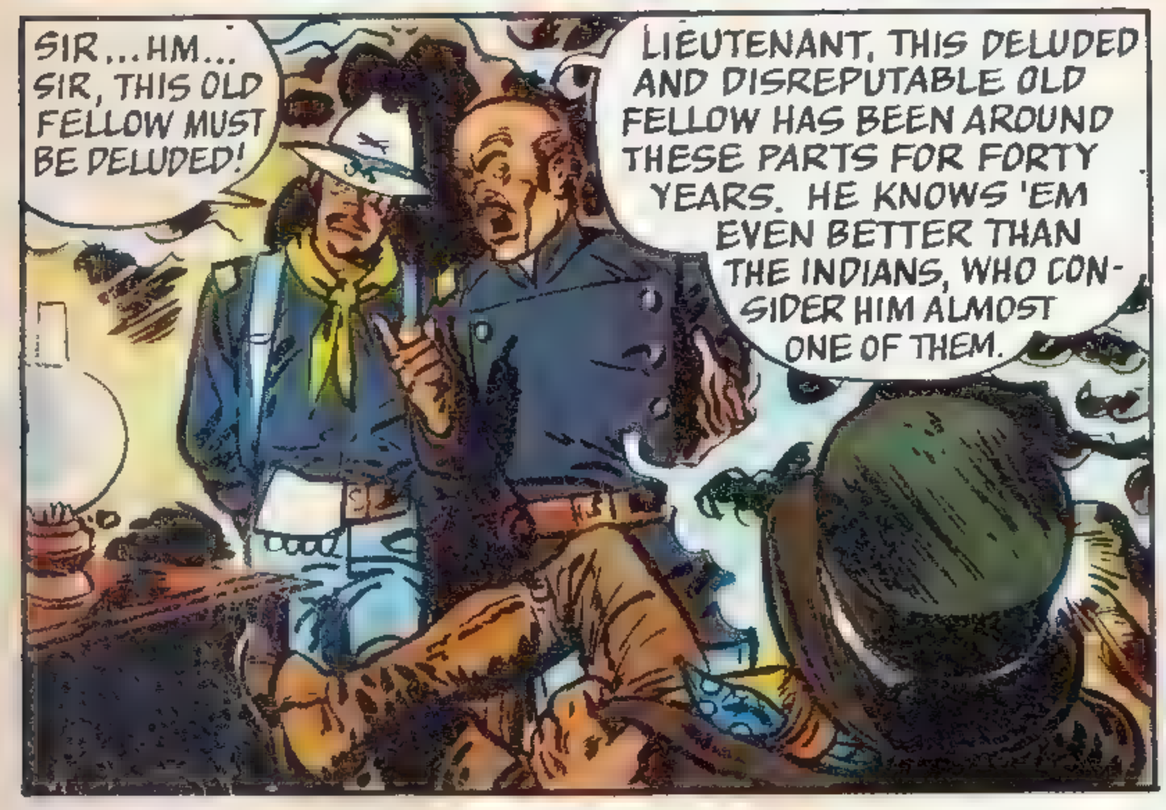

THE LAST OF THEM CAME IN YESTERDAY. THEY WERE POSITIVE. THE TRIBES WERE STILL THERE... AND MY COLUMNS MOVE OFF IN TWENTY MINUTES' TIME TO CUT OFF ALL ESCAPE ROUTES FROM THE MOUNTAINS AND MOP UP THE INDIANS!
HO! HO! I RECKON YOUR SCOUTS NEED GLASSES, OLD-TIMER! FACT IS, COCHISE IS A WILY OLD FOX... HO! HO! HO!

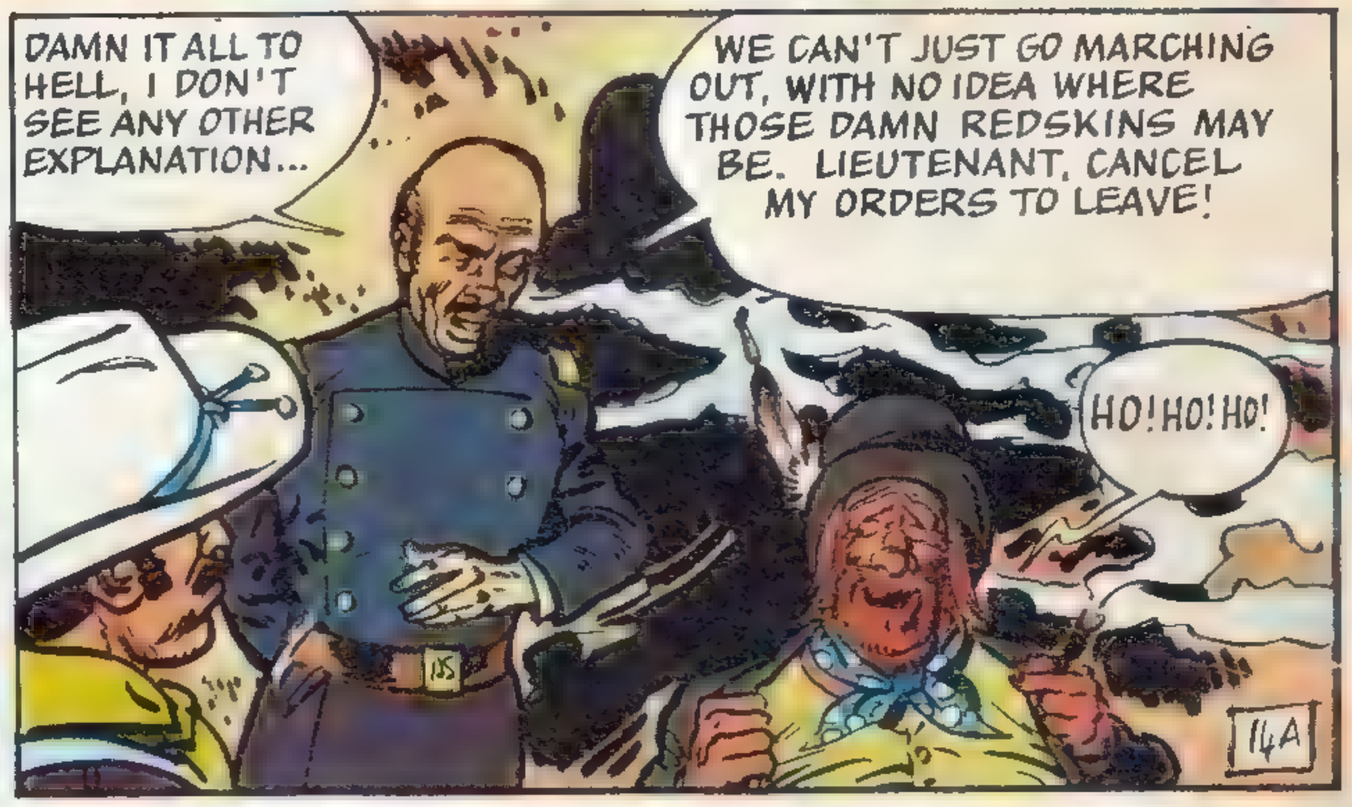

WELL, WHAT D'YOU THINK? IN COURSE, COCHISE GOT WIND OF YOUR STRATEGY! WHY, THEY COULD HEAR YOUR MEN'S BOOTS WAY OFF IN LANGTRY, WEEKS BACK! HO! HO! HO!
13B


AND THAT REFUGEE CAMP OUTSIDE THE FORT GATES MUST BE FAIR CRAWLING WITH SPIES! I GUESS COCHISE WANTED YOU THINKING HE WAS DUG IN UP THERE, RIGHT TO THE LAST MOMENT! HE STAYED PUT...

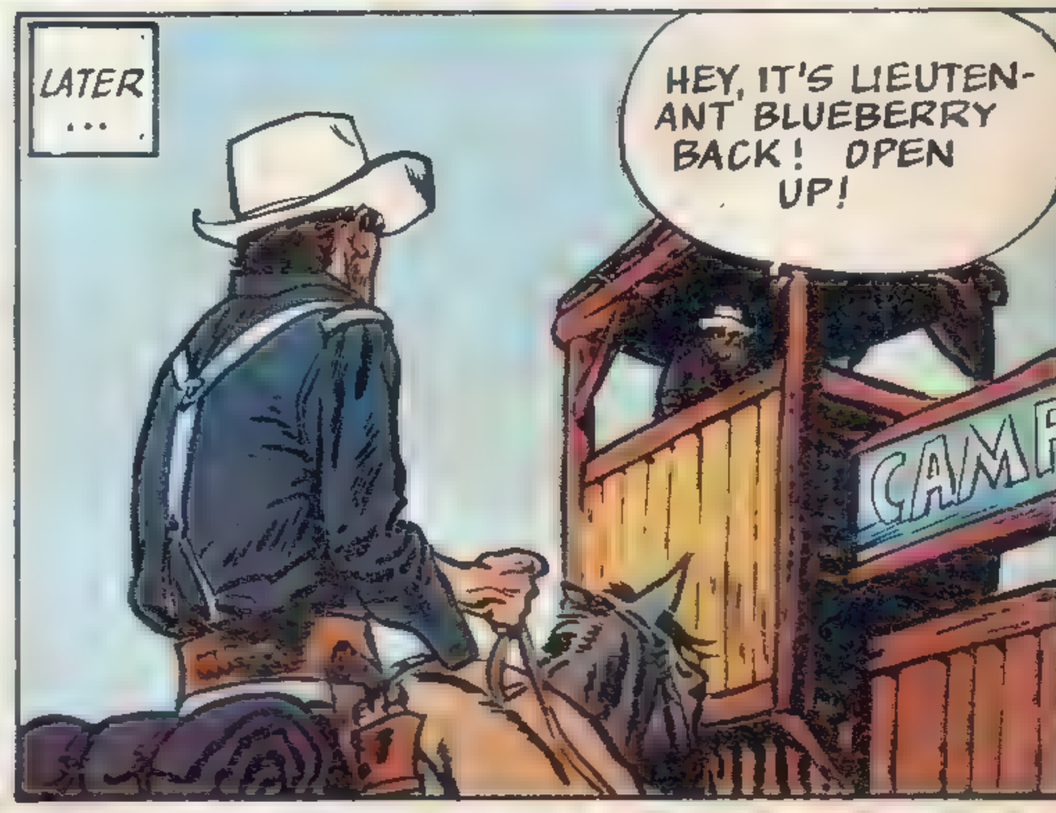

...THEN, WHILE A FEW OF HIS BRAVES KEPT YOUR PATROLS OCCUPIED, SO'S TO PUT 'EM OFF THE TRACK, THE OLD FOX MADE OFF BAG AND BAGGAGE! HO! HO!


SO NOW YOU'RE ABOUT TO WEAR YOURSELF OUT, SURROUNDING THE NEST WHEN THE BIRDS HAVE FLOWN! HO! HO! AND FOR ALL YOU KNOW, COCHISE IS GETTING READY TO TAKE YOU IN THE REAR...


SIR...HM... SIR, THIS OLD FELLOW MUST BE DELUDED!
LIEUTENANT, THIS DELUDED AND DISREPUTABLE OLD FELLOW HAS BEEN AROUND THESE PARTS FOR FORTY YEARS. HE KNOWS 'EM EVEN BETTER THAN THE INDIANS, WHO CONSIDER HIM ALMOST ONE OF THEM.

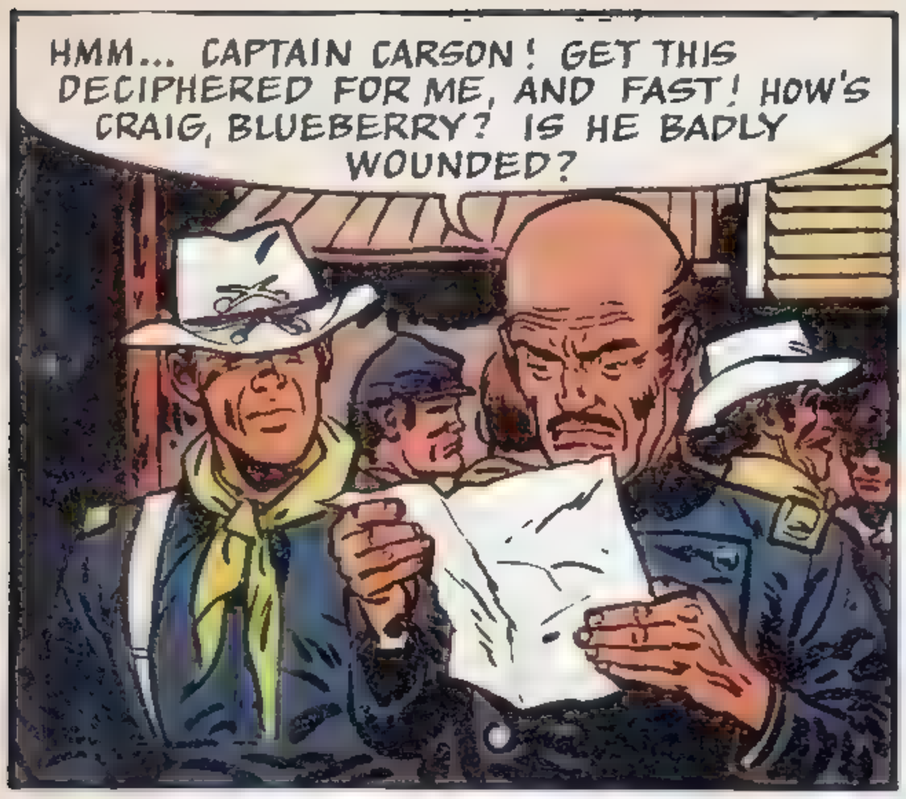

DAMN IT ALL TO HELL, I DON'T SEE ANY OTHER EXPLANATION...
WE CAN'T JUST GO MARCHING OUT, WITH NO IDEA WHERE THOSE DAMN REDSKINS MAY BE. LIEUTENANT, CANCEL MY ORDERS TO LEAVE!
HO! HO! HO!
14A

AT DAWN...
CAMP BOWIE... AT LAST! WHY... LOOKS AS IF THE ARMY'S STILL THERE! CAN CROOK HAVE WAITED FOR ME?

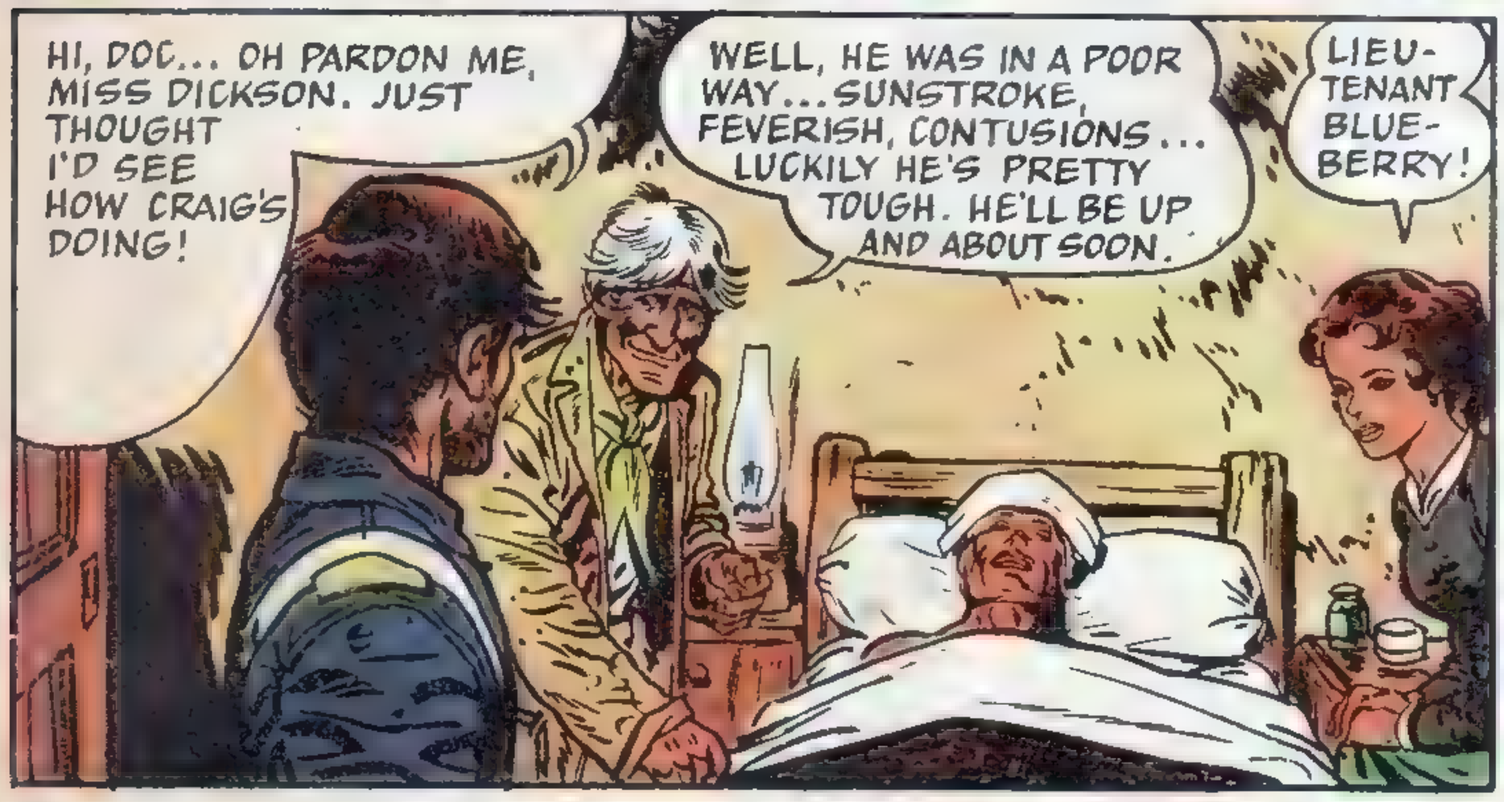

LATER...
HEY, IT'S LIEUTENANT BLUEBERRY BACK! OPEN UP!
CAMP

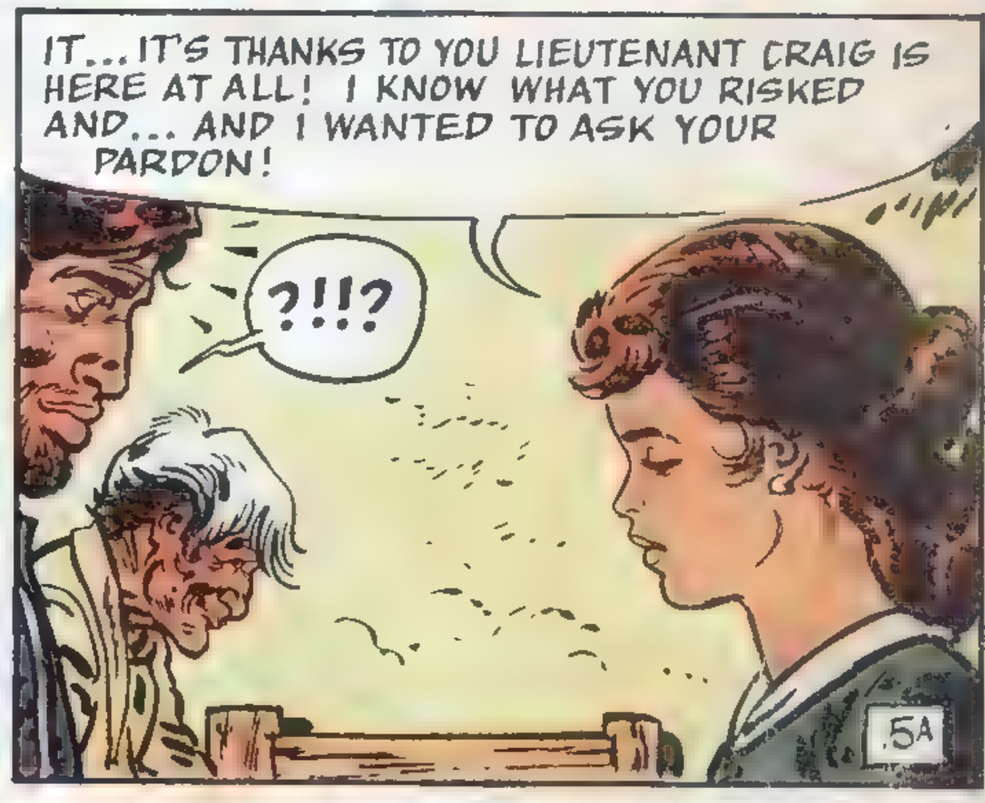
WITH LIEUTENANT CRAIG OVER HIS SADDLE! HE DON'T LOOK SO GOOD...
GET THE DOC, QUICK! TAKE CRAIG TO THE SICK BAY... AND TELL MISS DICKSON.
BLUEBERRY ...ALIVE! AMAZING! THE MAN'S INDESTRUCTIBLE!

THANK GOD YOU'RE STILL HERE, SIR! I GOT THE TELEGRAM FROM WASHINGTON! HERE!
14B

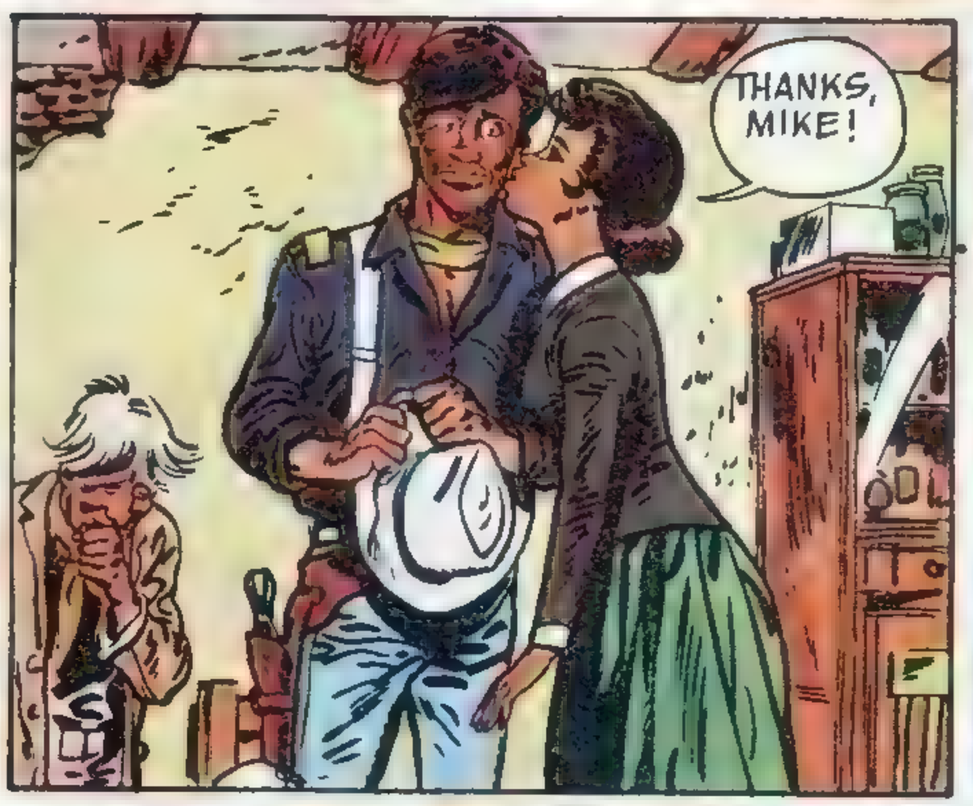

HMM... CAPTAIN CARSON! GET THIS DECIPHERED FOR ME, AND FAST! HOW'S CRAIG, BLUEBERRY? IS HE BADLY WOUNDED?

BRIEFLY, BLUEBERRY TELLS THE TALE OF THEIR ADVENTURES.
CONGRATULATIONS, LIEUTENANT! YOU MAY BE THE MOST INSUBORDINATE, PIGHEADED OFFICER I EVER MET, BUT I HAVE TO ADMIT YOU'RE THE BRAVEST, MOST EFFICIENT ONE TOO! NOW, GET SOME REST... YOU CAN HARDLY KEEP ON YOUR FEET!
THANKS, SIR... BUT I'M STILL VOLUNTEERING TO GET IN TOUCH WITH COCHISE, REMEMBER?

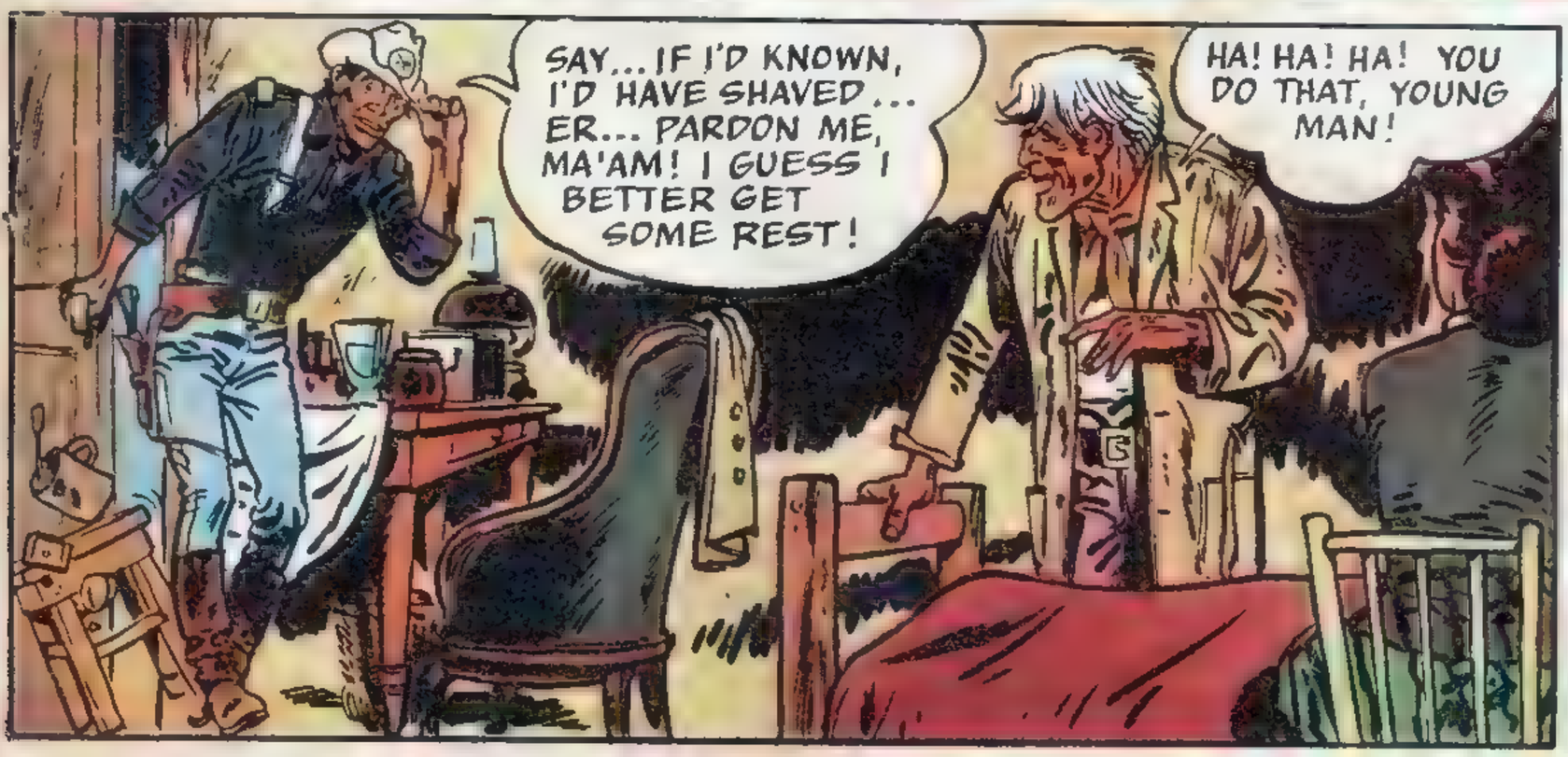

HI, DOC... OH PARDON ME, MISS DICKSON. JUST THOUGHT I'D SEE HOW CRAIG'S DOING!
WELL, HE WAS IN A POOR WAY... SUNSTROKE, FEVERISH, CONTUSIONS... LUCKILY HE'S PRETTY TOUGH. HE'LL BE UP AND ABOUT SOON.
LIEUTENANT BLUEBERRY!

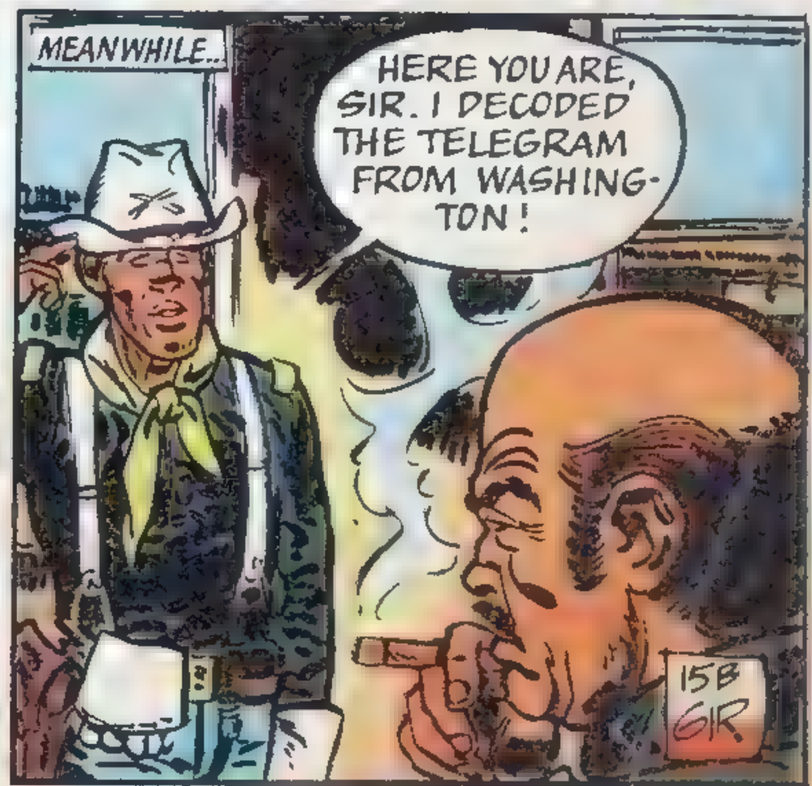

IT... IT'S THANKS TO YOU LIEUTENANT CRAIG IS HERE AT ALL! I KNOW WHAT YOU RISKED AND... AND I WANTED TO ASK YOUR PARDON!
?!!?
5A

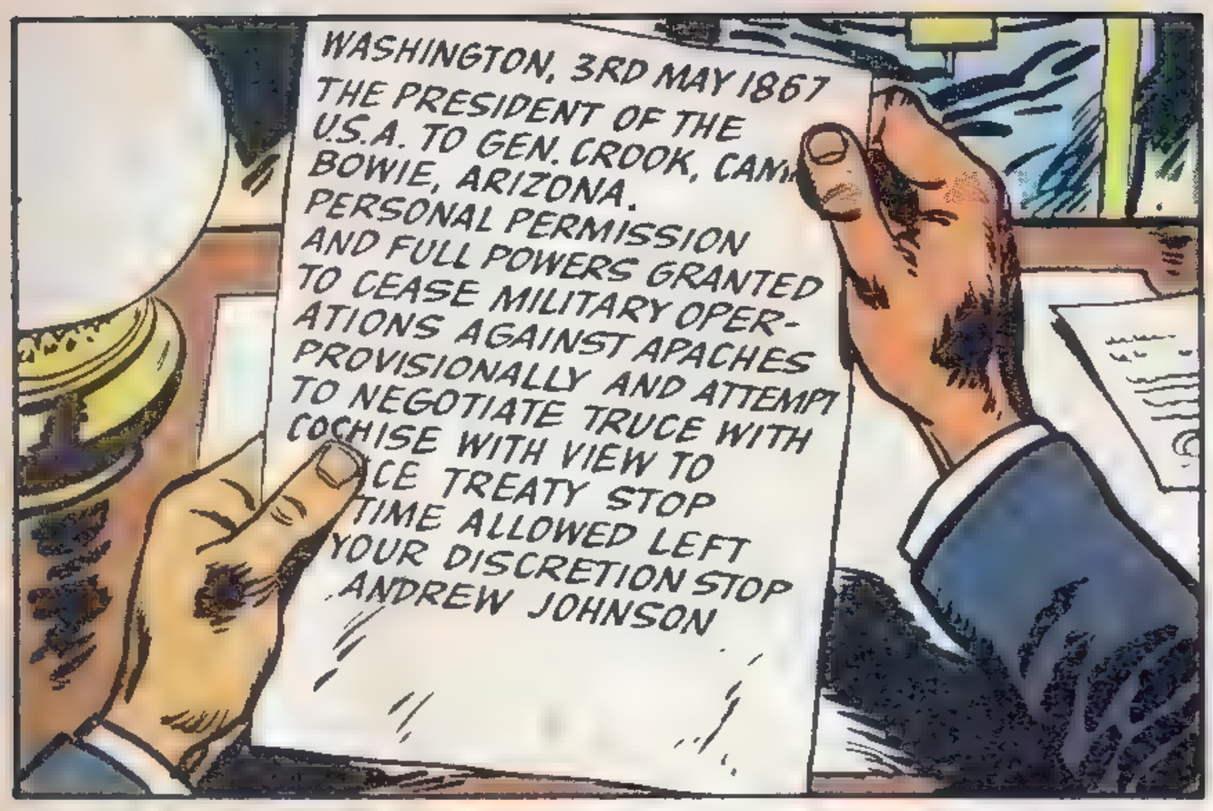
I... I'D LIKE TO APOLOGIZE PUBLICLY FOR WHAT I SAID TO YOU. I... I GUESS I DIDN'T MEAN IT... I WAS JUST SO SCARED AND ANGRY...
WELL, I...

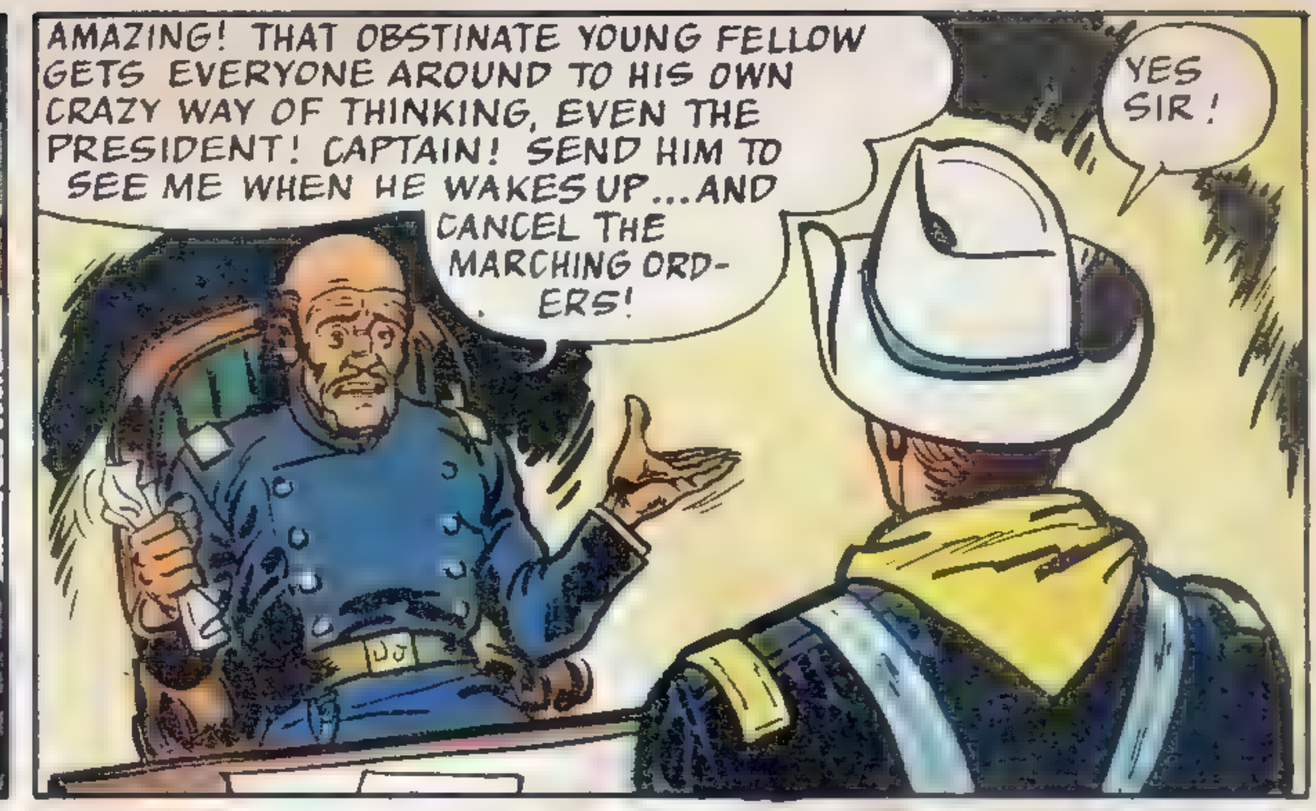

THANKS, MIKE!

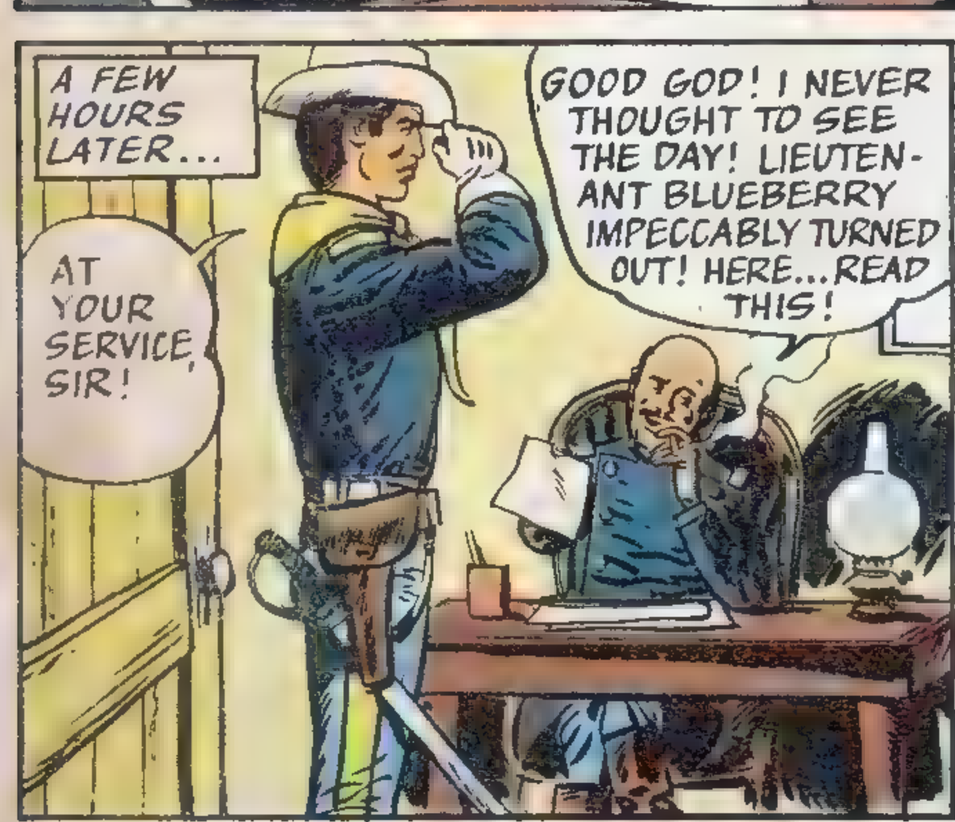
?!!?
WHEW!

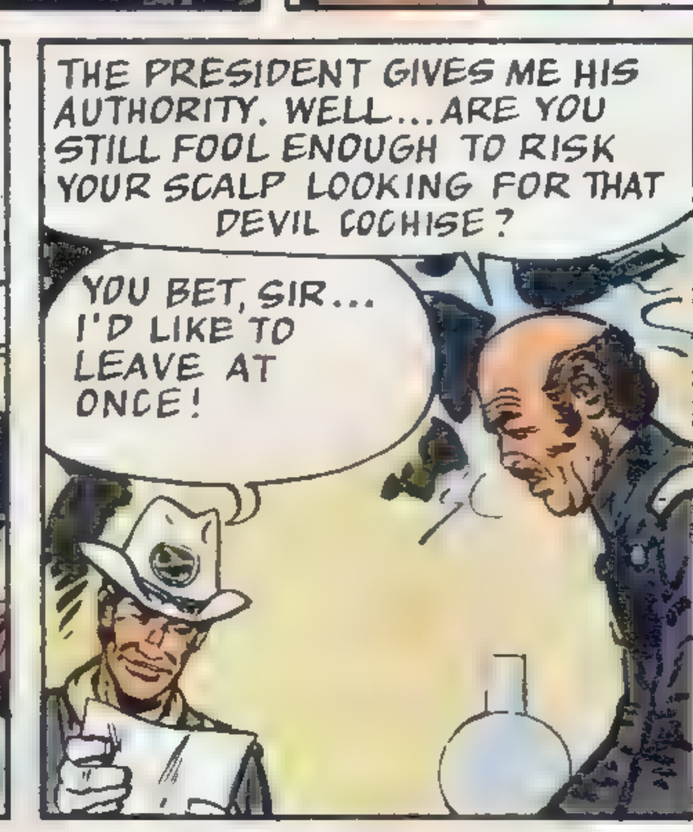

SAY... IF I'D KNOWN, I'D HAVE SHAVED... ER... PARDON ME, MA'AM! I GUESS I BETTER GET SOME REST!
HA! HA! HA! YOU DO THAT, YOUNG MAN!

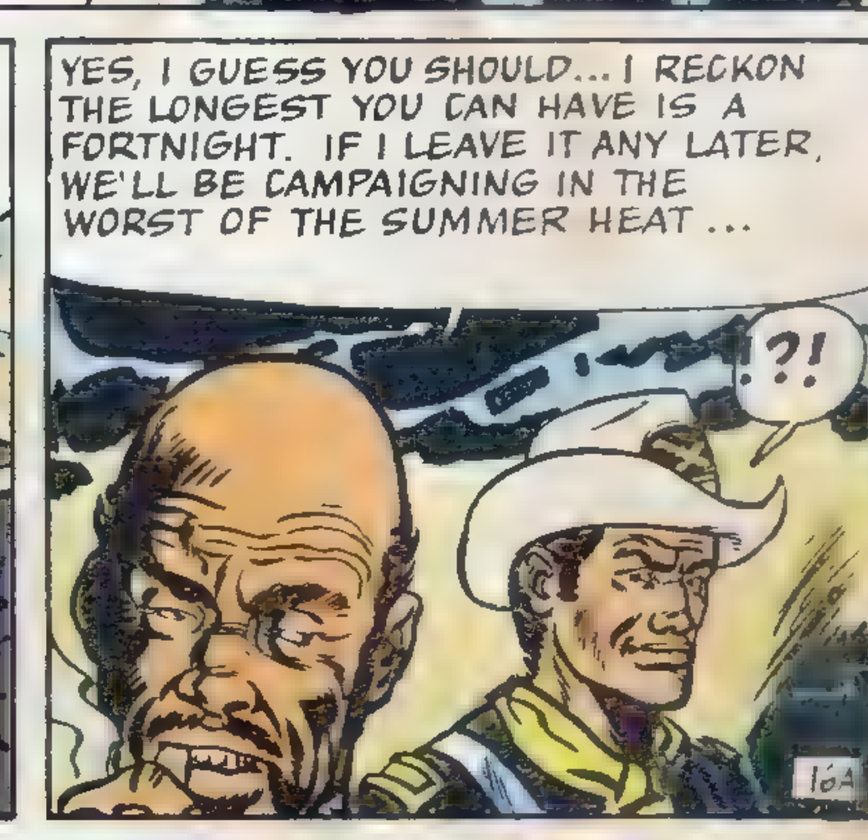

MEANWHILE...
HERE YOU ARE, SIR. I DECODED THE TELEGRAM FROM WASHINGTON!
15B
GIR

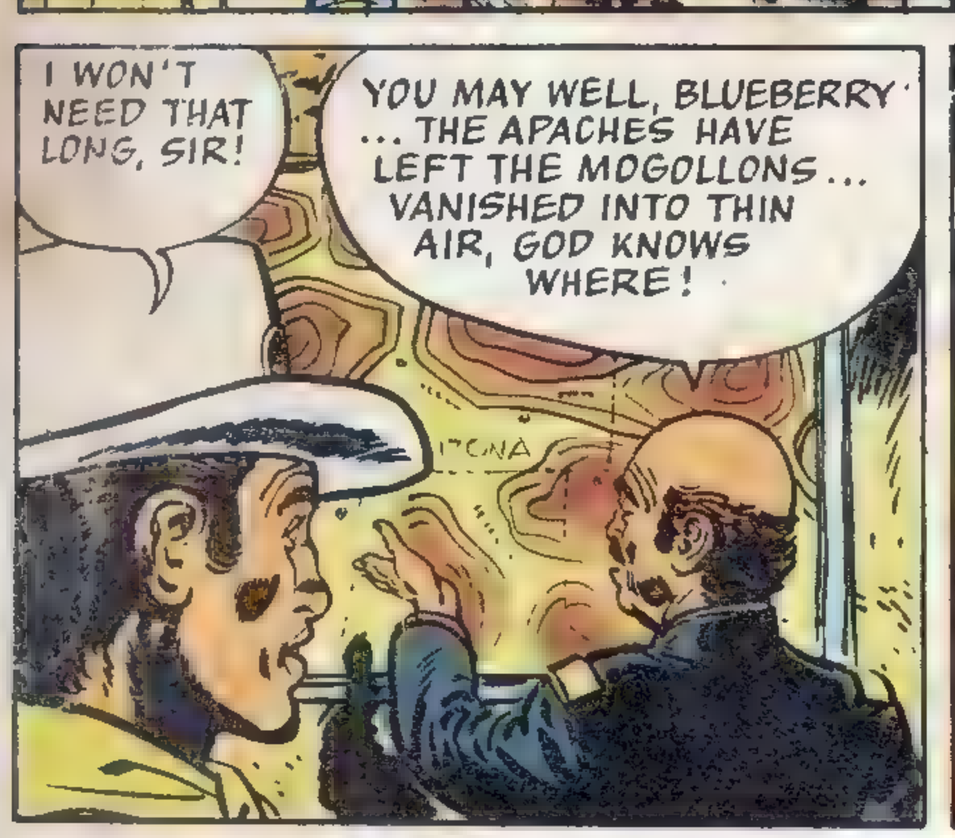

WASHINGTON, 3RD MAY 1867
THE PRESIDENT OF THE U.S.A. TO GEN. CROOK, CAMP BOWIE, ARIZONA.
PERSONAL PERMISSION AND FULL POWERS GRANTED TO CEASE MILITARY OPERATIONS AGAINST APACHES PROVISIONALLY AND ATTEMPT TO NEGOTIATE TRUCE WITH COCHISE WITH VIEW TO PEACE TREATY STOP TIME ALLOWED LEFT YOUR DISCRETION STOP
ANDREW JOHNSON

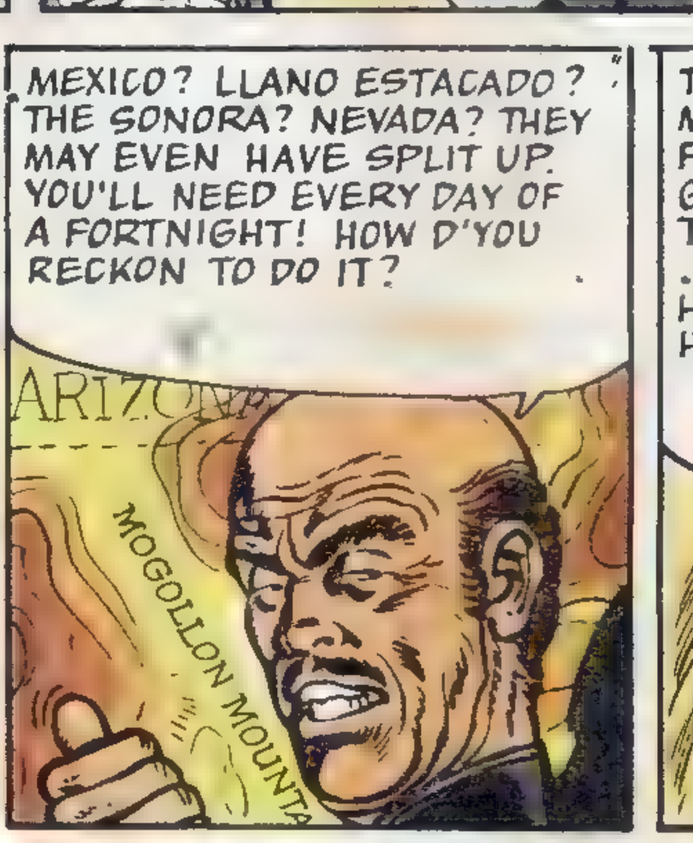

AMAZING! THAT OBSTINATE YOUNG FELLOW GETS EVERYONE AROUND TO HIS OWN CRAZY WAY OF THINKING, EVEN THE PRESIDENT! CAPTAIN! SEND HIM TO SEE ME WHEN HE WAKES UP...AND CANCEL THE MARCHING ORDERS!
YES SIR!

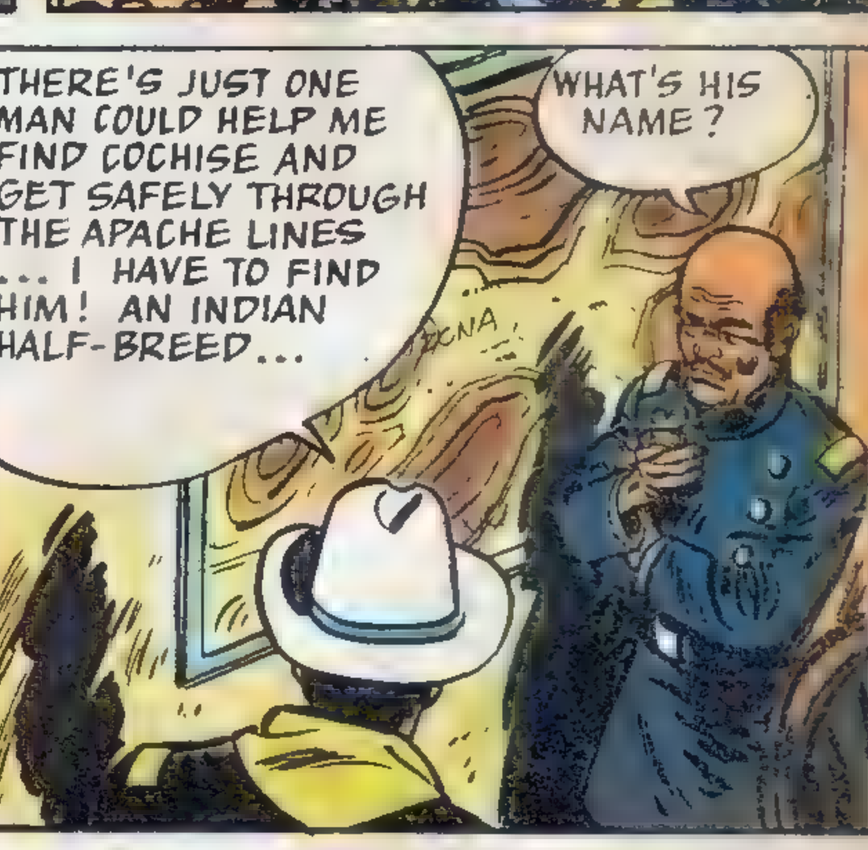

A FEW HOURS LATER...
AT YOUR SERVICE, SIR!
GOOD GOD! I NEVER THOUGHT TO SEE THE DAY! LIEUTENANT BLUEBERRY IMPECCABLY TURNED OUT! HERE...READ THIS!

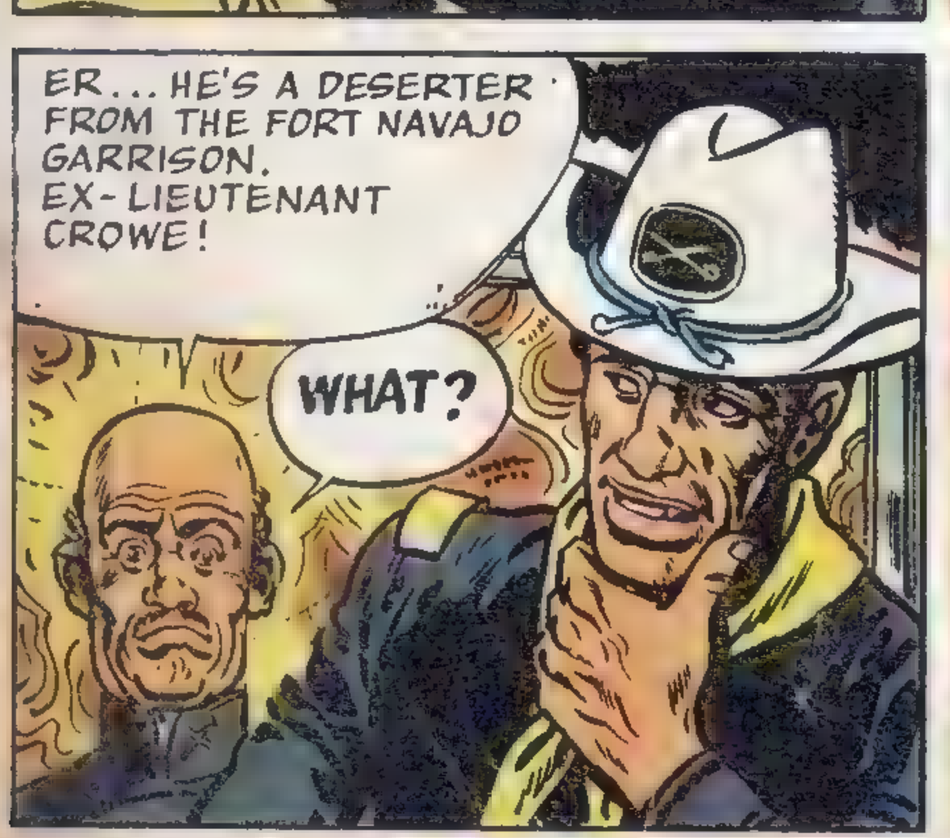

THE PRESIDENT GIVES ME HIS AUTHORITY. WELL...ARE YOU STILL FOOL ENOUGH TO RISK YOUR SCALP LOOKING FOR THAT DEVIL COCHISE?
YOU BET, SIR... I'D LIKE TO LEAVE AT ONCE!

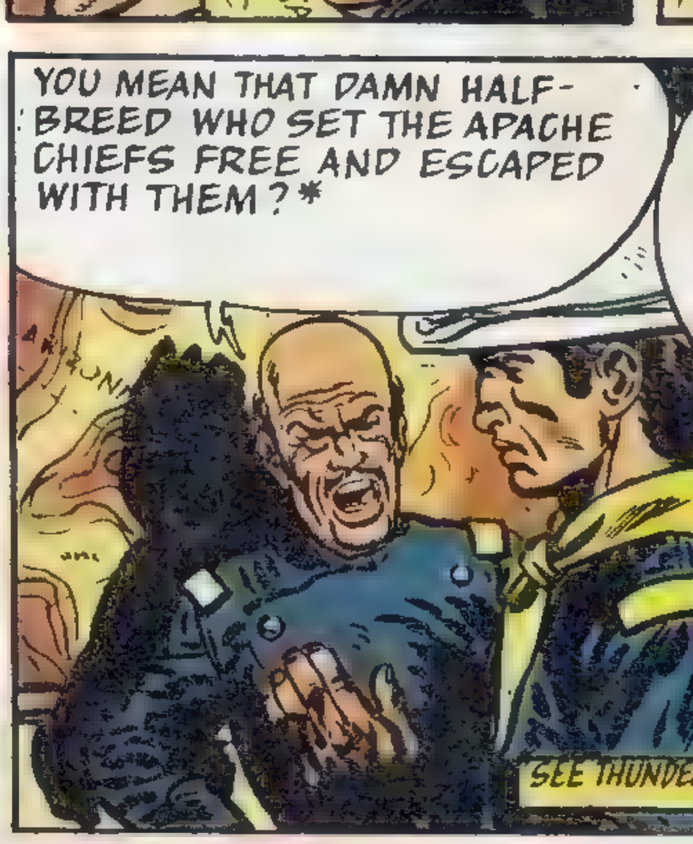

YES, I GUESS YOU SHOULD... I RECKON THE LONGEST YOU CAN HAVE IS A FORTNIGHT. IF I LEAVE IT ANY LATER, WE'LL BE CAMPAIGNING IN THE WORST OF THE SUMMER HEAT...
?!
16A

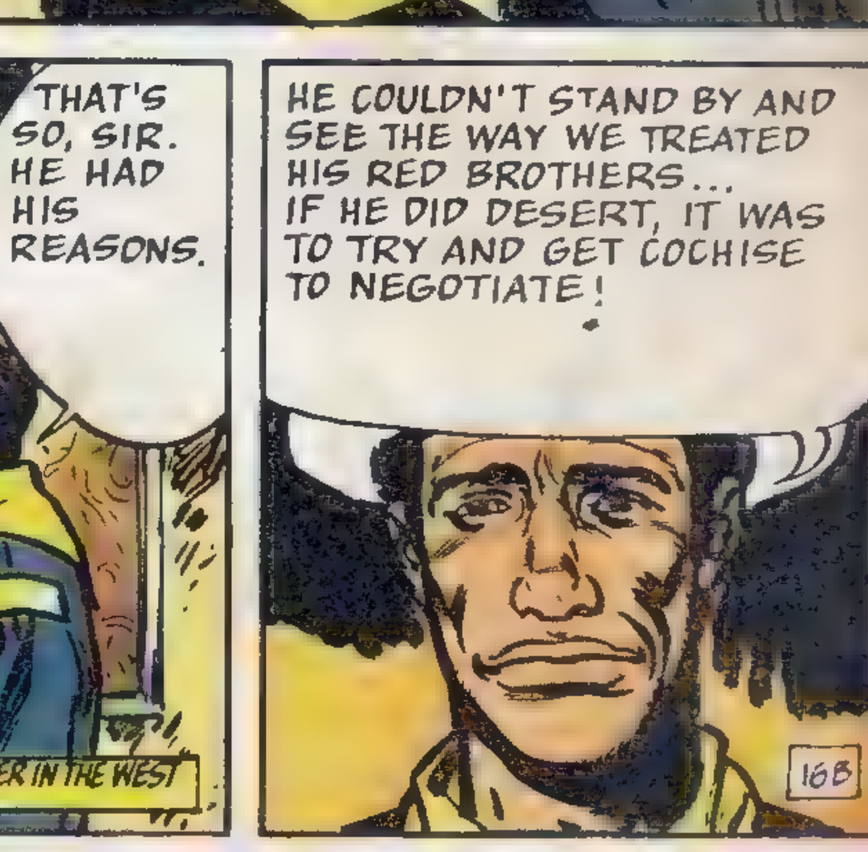

I WON'T NEED THAT LONG, SIR!
YOU MAY WELL, BLUEBERRY ... THE APACHES HAVE LEFT THE MOGOLLONS... VANISHED INTO THIN AIR, GOD KNOWS WHERE!

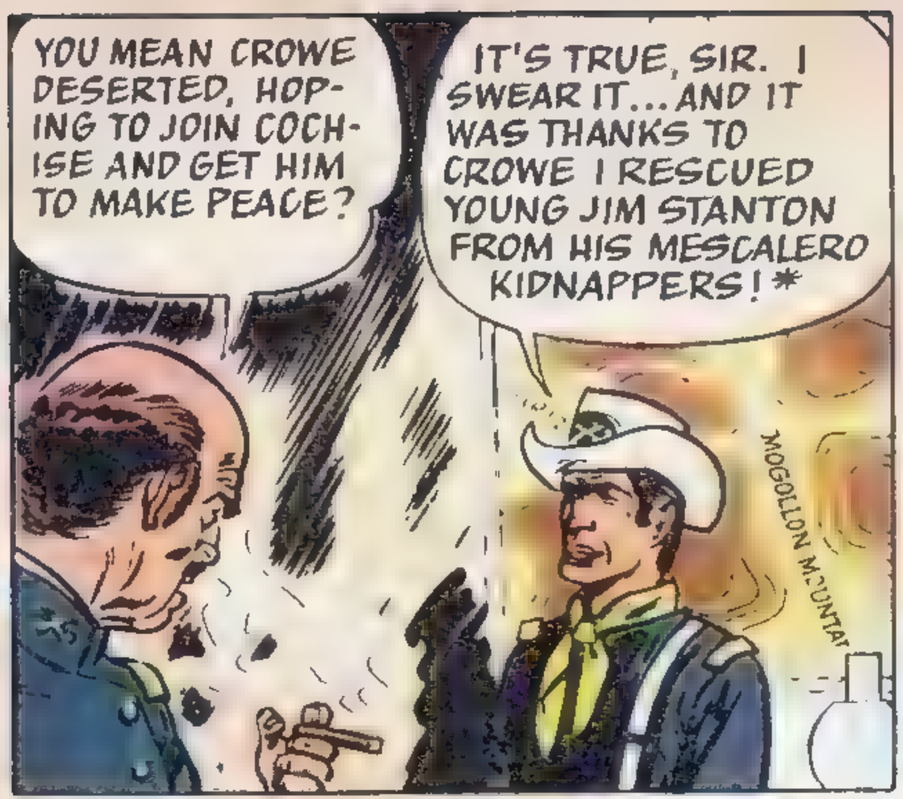

MEXICO? LLANO ESTACADO? THE SONORA? NEVADA? THEY MAY EVEN HAVE SPLIT UP. YOU'LL NEED EVERY DAY OF A FORTNIGHT! HOW D'YOU RECKON TO DO IT?
ARIZONA
MOGOLLON MOUNTA

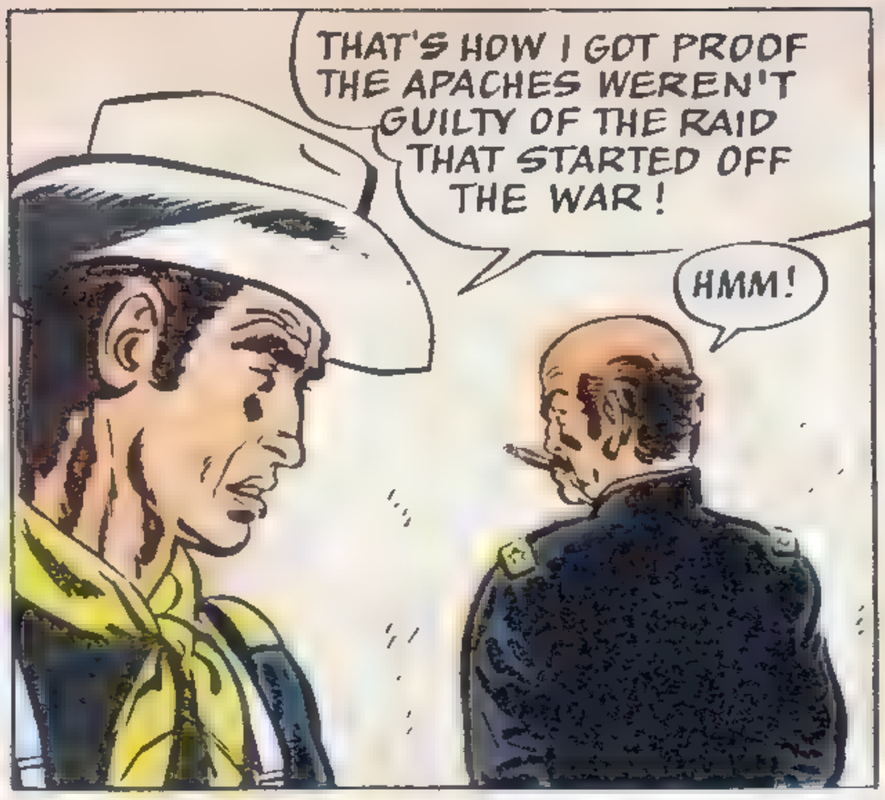

THERE'S JUST ONE MAN COULD HELP ME FIND COCHISE AND GET SAFELY THROUGH THE APACHE LINES ... I HAVE TO FIND HIM! AN INDIAN HALF-BREED...
WHAT'S HIS NAME?


ER... HE'S A DESERTER FROM THE FORT NAVAJO GARRISON. EX-LIEUTENANT CROWE!
WHAT?

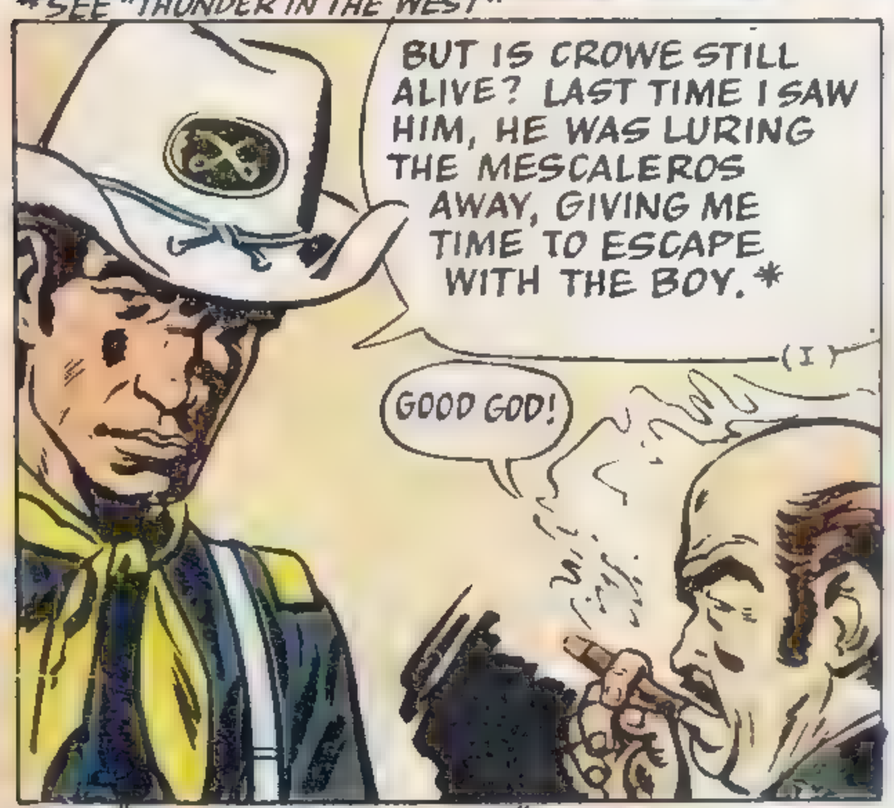

YOU MEAN THAT DAMN HALF-BREED WHO SET THE APACHE CHIEFS FREE AND ESCAPED WITH THEM?*
THAT'S SO, SIR. HE HAD HIS REASONS.
SEE THUNDER IN THE WEST

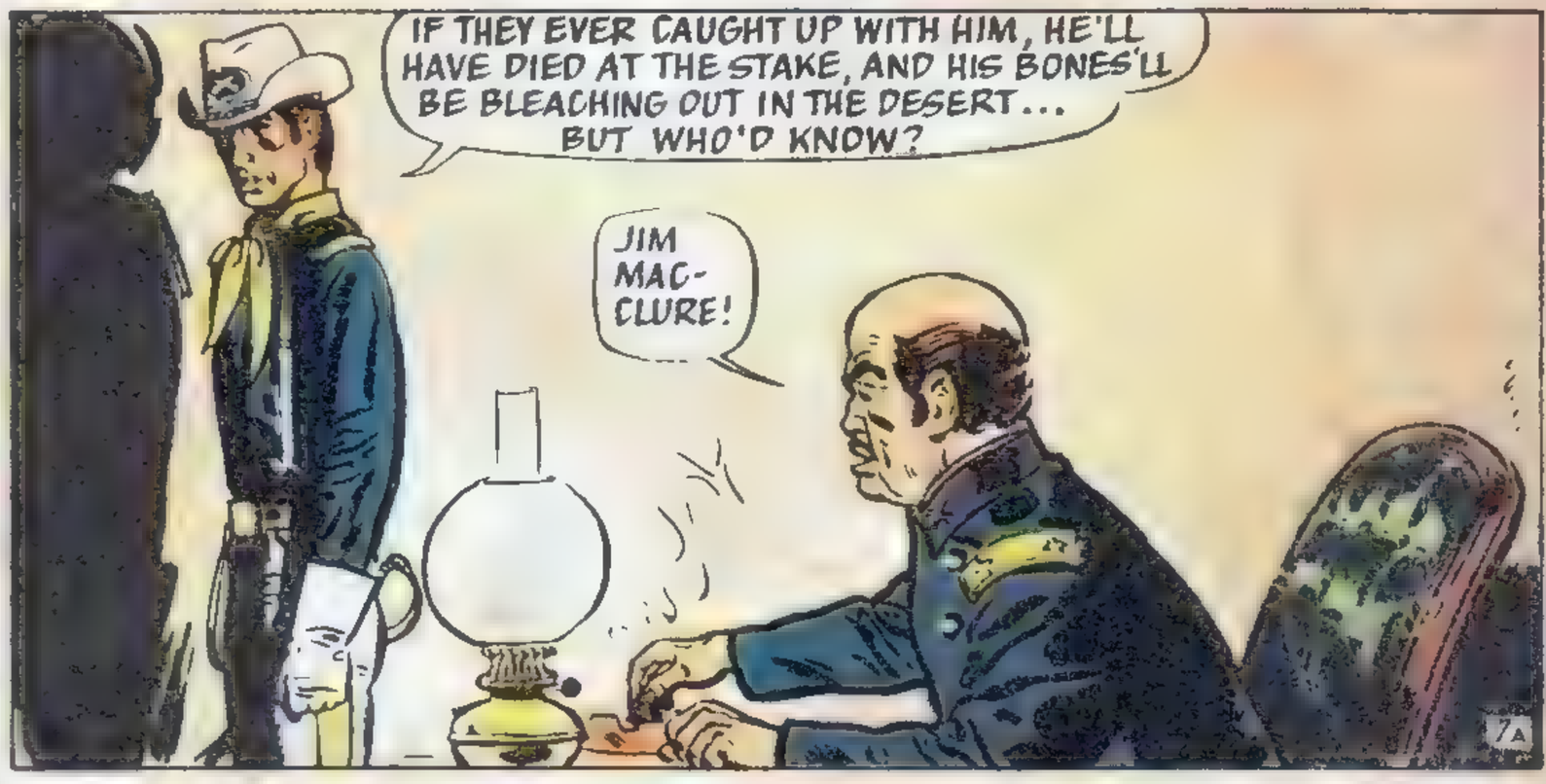

HE COULDN'T STAND BY AND SEE THE WAY WE TREATED HIS RED BROTHERS... IF HE DID DESERT, IT WAS TO TRY AND GET COCHISE TO NEGOTIATE!
16B



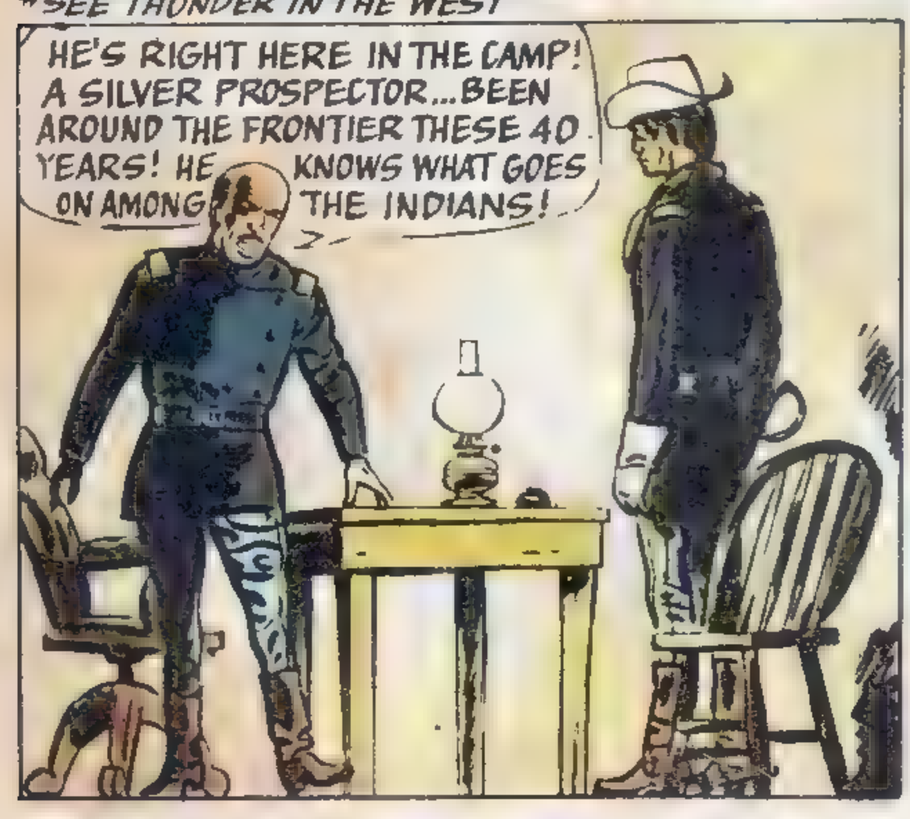


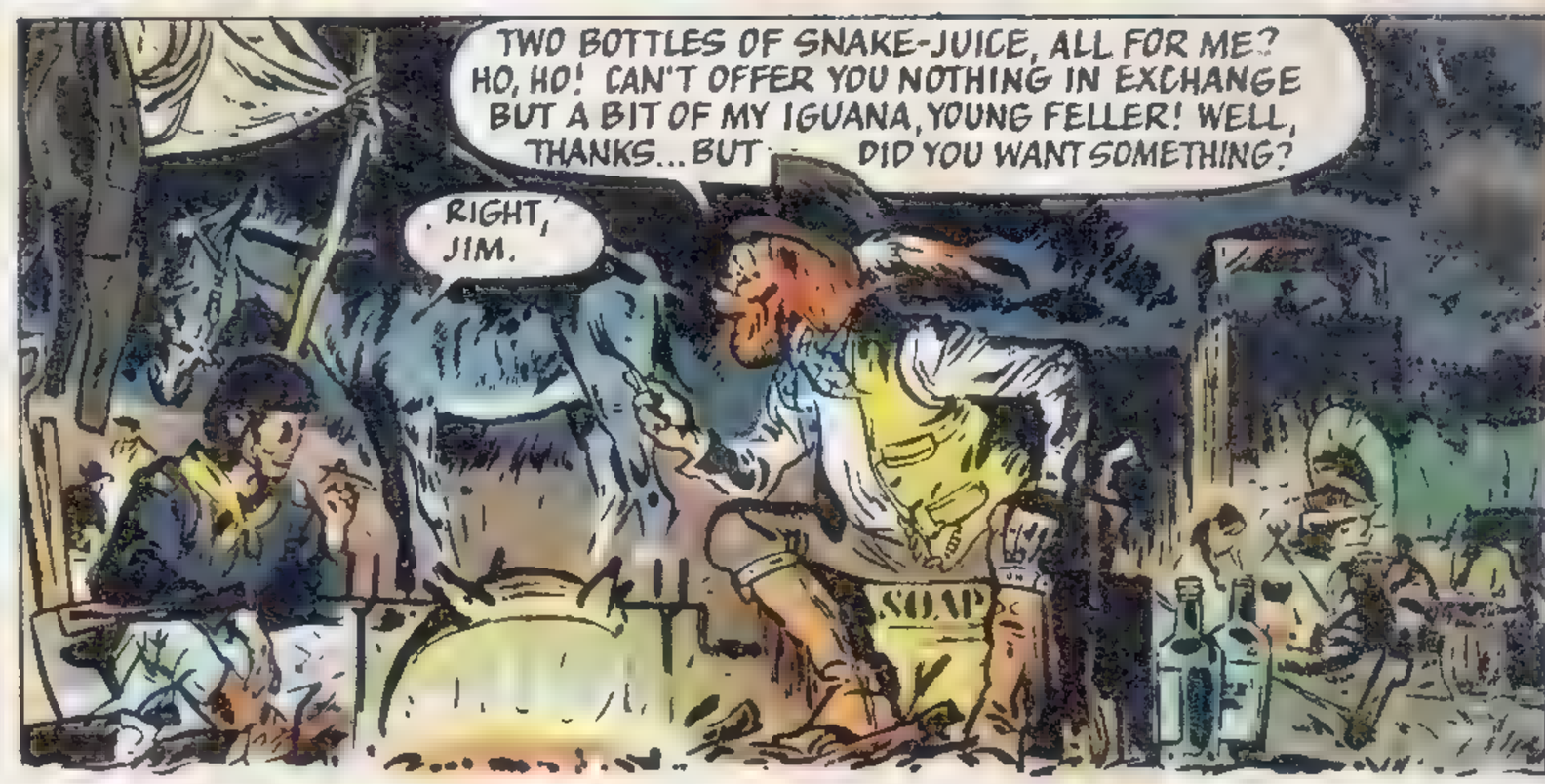
*SEE "THUNDER IN THE WEST"

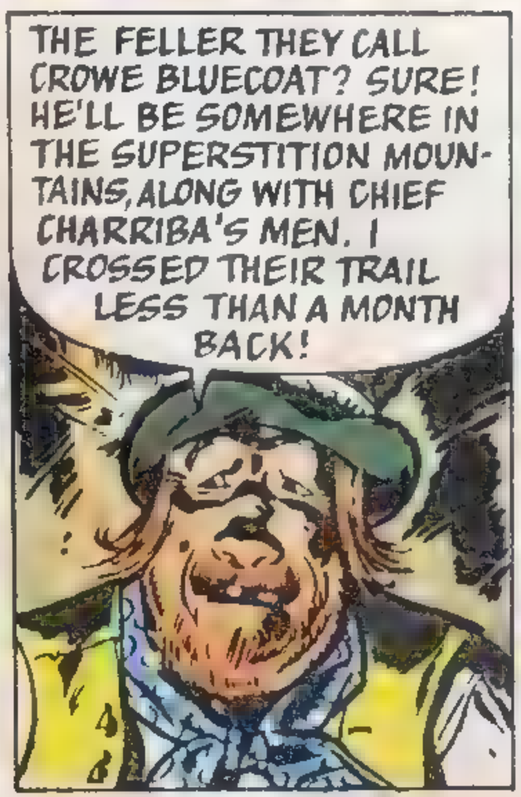




*SEE "THUNDER IN THE WEST"







KEEP 'EM...THEY'RE A PRESENT. HMM... YOUR MULE NOT AS YOUNG AS IT WAS, EH? PITY. THE GENERAL WOULD HAVE GIVEN YOU A NEW ONE...BESIDES YOUR SCOUT'S PAY, OF COURSE!

HOLD ON, SON! WHAT DID YOU SAY?

A NEW MULE? HMM... I GET PRETTY TIRED OF WALKING, AND THAT'S A FACT!

YOU NEVER KNOW... THE OLD MAN MIGHT EVEN STUMP UP FOR A SADDLE!

HEY, THIS MAKES A DIFFERENCE, SON...SPECIALLY IF THE GENERAL WAS TO ADD A LITTLE BONUS ...SAY 200 DOLLARS? WHO WANTS TO DIE IN BED, ANYWAYS... 'SIDES, I AIN'T GOT NO BED!

OKAY, JIM

I'LL FIX IT ALL WITH THE GENERAL...MULES, HORSES, PROVISIONS, GUNS... HOW SOON CAN WE START?

TONIGHT...DON'T WANT ANY APACHE SPIES SEEING US LEAVE CAMP! AND GET OUT OF THAT FANCY RIG! UNIFORM! MIGHT AS WELL TAKE A BUGLE AND FLAG TOO!

GOOD WORK, SON! THAT LOOKS A WHOLE LOT BETTER!

NOW, GET THIS INTO YOUR HEAD: IF WE MEET ANYONE, SPECIALLY APACHES, YOU'RE MY PARTNER. GET IT?

OKAY, JIMMY.

LIEUTENANT BLUEBERRY?

WE'RE OFF!

I HEARD YOU WERE LEAVING...I WANTED TO WISH YOU LUCK! COME BACK SAFE!

ER... I'LL DO MY BEST MA'AM!

HO! HO! HO! I RECKON YOU'RE PLUMB CRAZY, SON! CHASING AFTER APACHES, WHEN YOU GOT BETTER THINGS TO DO RIGHT HERE!

ONE MORE WORD OUT OF YOU, JIM, AND YOU WON'T SIT COMFORTABLE IN THAT SADDLE FOR A LONG TIME!

GOING DUE SOUTH, BLUEBERRY AND OLD MACCLURE MAKE FOR THE PEDREGOSA MOUNTAINS.

IT'S BROAD DAYLIGHT, JIMMY! WE'RE CRAZY TO KEEP RIDING IN THE OPEN...WE DON'T HAVE A CHANCE OF ESCAPING ANY INDIANS!

YOU BET WE DON'T, SON... AND WE GOTTA PRAY THEY RECOGNIZE ME! IT'S THE ONLY WAY WE'LL SAVE OUR SKINS!

WAR OR NO WAR, UP TILL NOW, THE APACHES HAVEN'T BOTHERED ME NONE. IT'S LIKE I WAS PART OF THE LANDSCAPE!

YEAH... AND IS THAT JUST BECAUSE THEY THINK YOU'RE HARMLESS?

WELL... I'VE DONE 'EM A SMALL SERVICE NOW AND THEN...

THIS MYSTERIOUS BUNDLE YOU DON'T WANT ME TO TOUCH, JIM... WOULD THAT BE ONE OF THOSE SMALL SERVICES? I HAVE AN IDEA GENERAL CROOK MIGHT NOT CARE FOR THAT...

MAYBE NOT, SON...

BUT I'M IN CHARGE HERE! DIDN'T NO ONE EVER TELL YOU NOT TO LOOK A GIFT HORSE IN THE MOUTH?

TWO DAYS LATER ...

YOU KNOW SOMETHING? I'M BEGINNING TO THINK YOU'RE RIGHT, YOU OLD SCOUNDREL! ODD... FOUR DAYS BACK THE SIERRAS WERE SWARMING WITH APACHES, AND WE HAVEN'T MET UP WITH A SINGLE ONE!

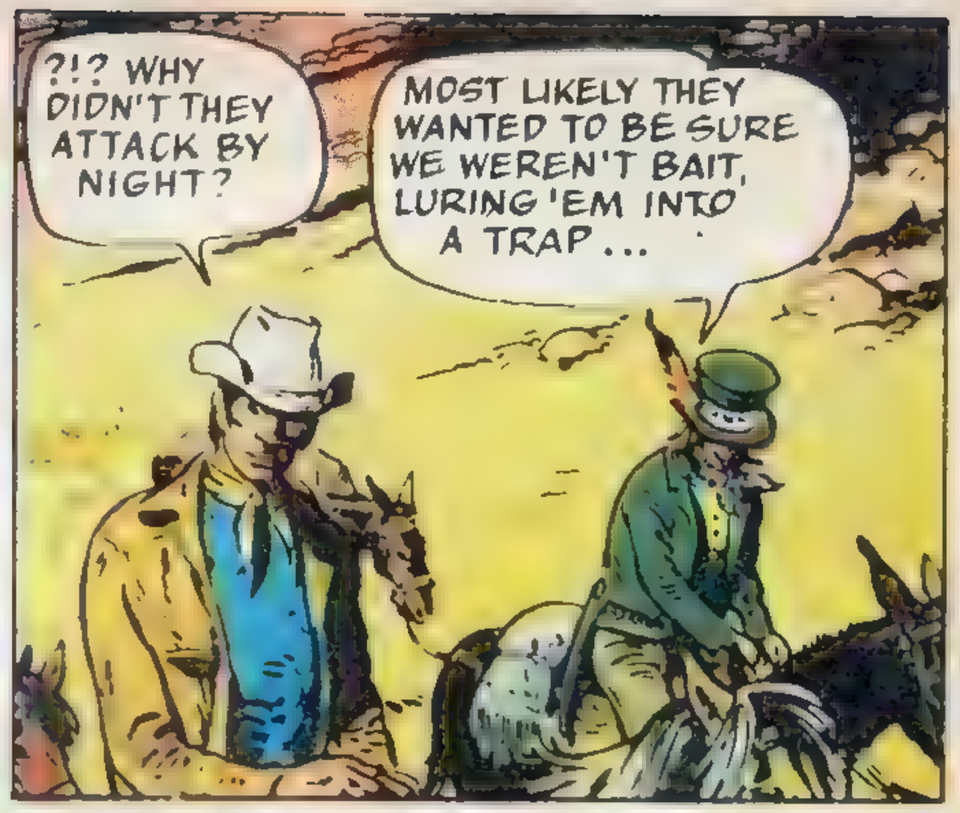
THEY ALL MADE FOR MEXICO. ONCE OVER THE FRONTIER, THEY CAN RE-GROUP AND WAIT FOR THEIR NEXT CHANCE TO ATTACK... BUT DON'T YOU BE SO SURE WE'RE ON OUR OWN, SON!

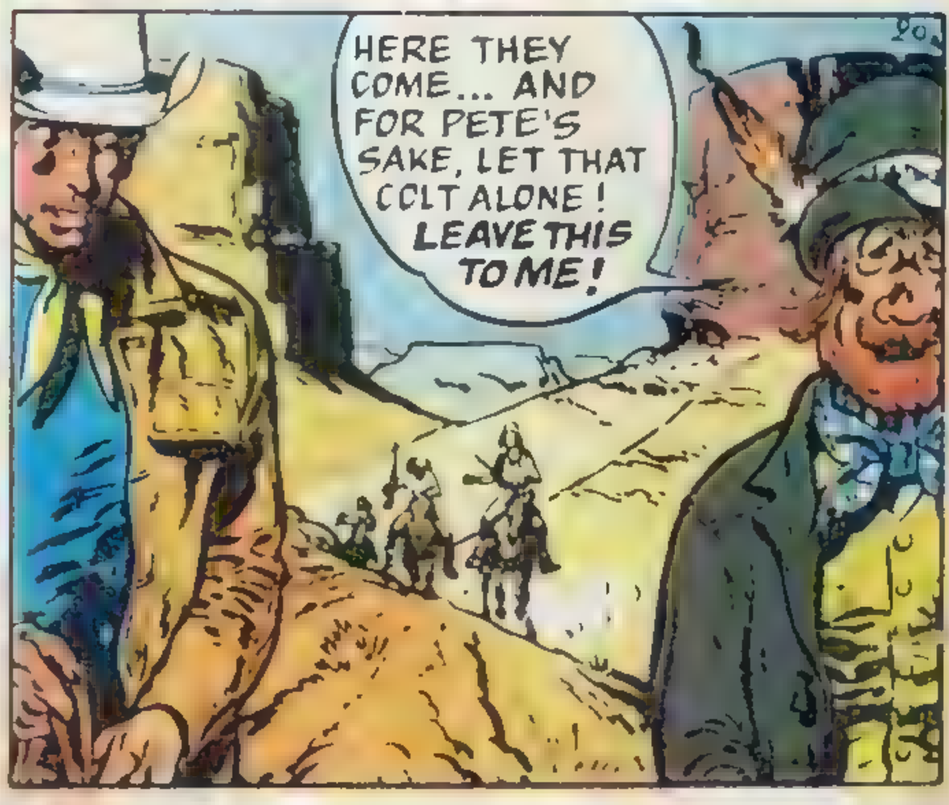
THIS PLACE AIN'T SO EMPTY AS IT LOOKS... TAKE A SQUINT AT THE TOP OF THAT CLIFF!

HM?

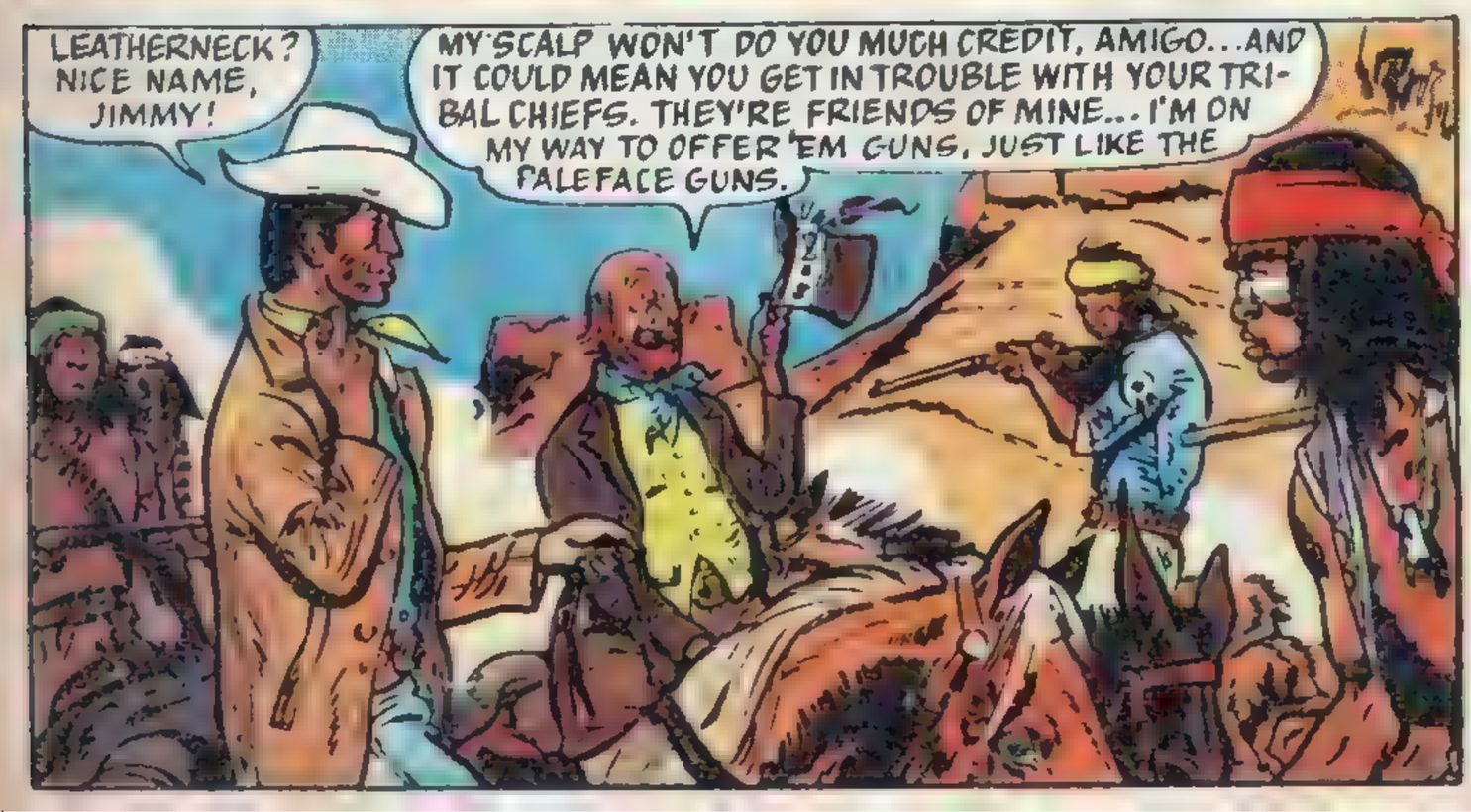
OHO!

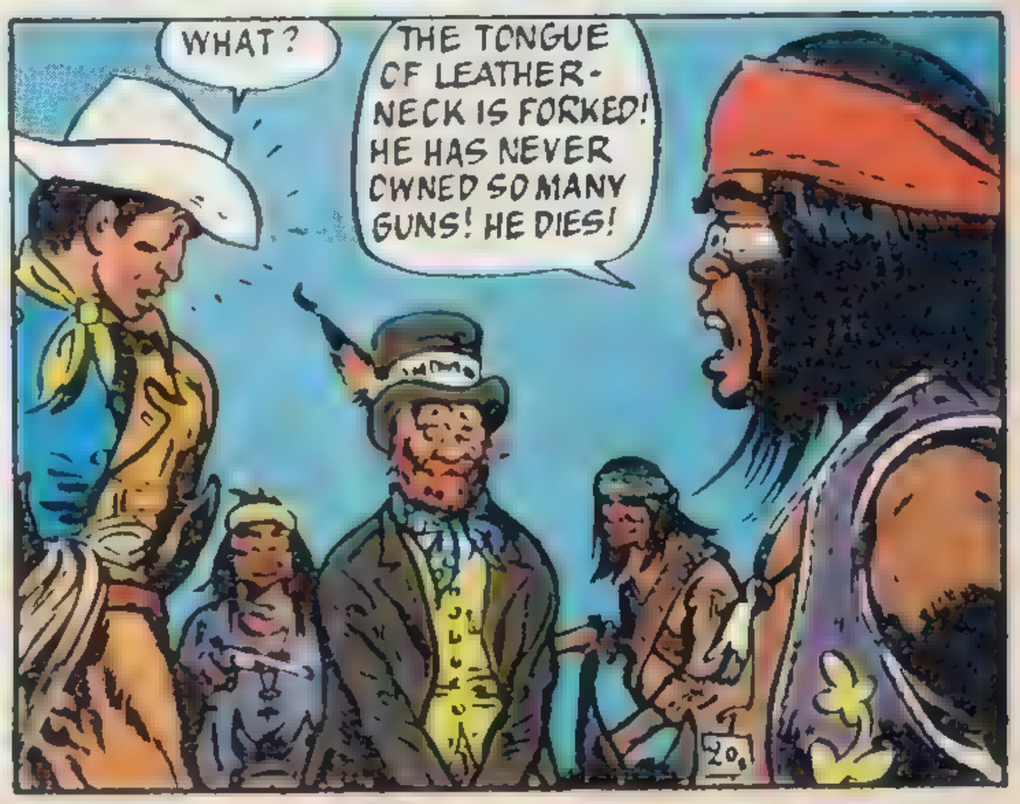
HELL... APACHE RIDERS! WHERE DID THEY SPRING FROM?
BEEN FOLLOWING US SINCE YESTERDAY EVENING ...NOW DON'T GO ACTING STUPID, SON! THESE WON'T BE THE ONLY REDSKINS AROUND!

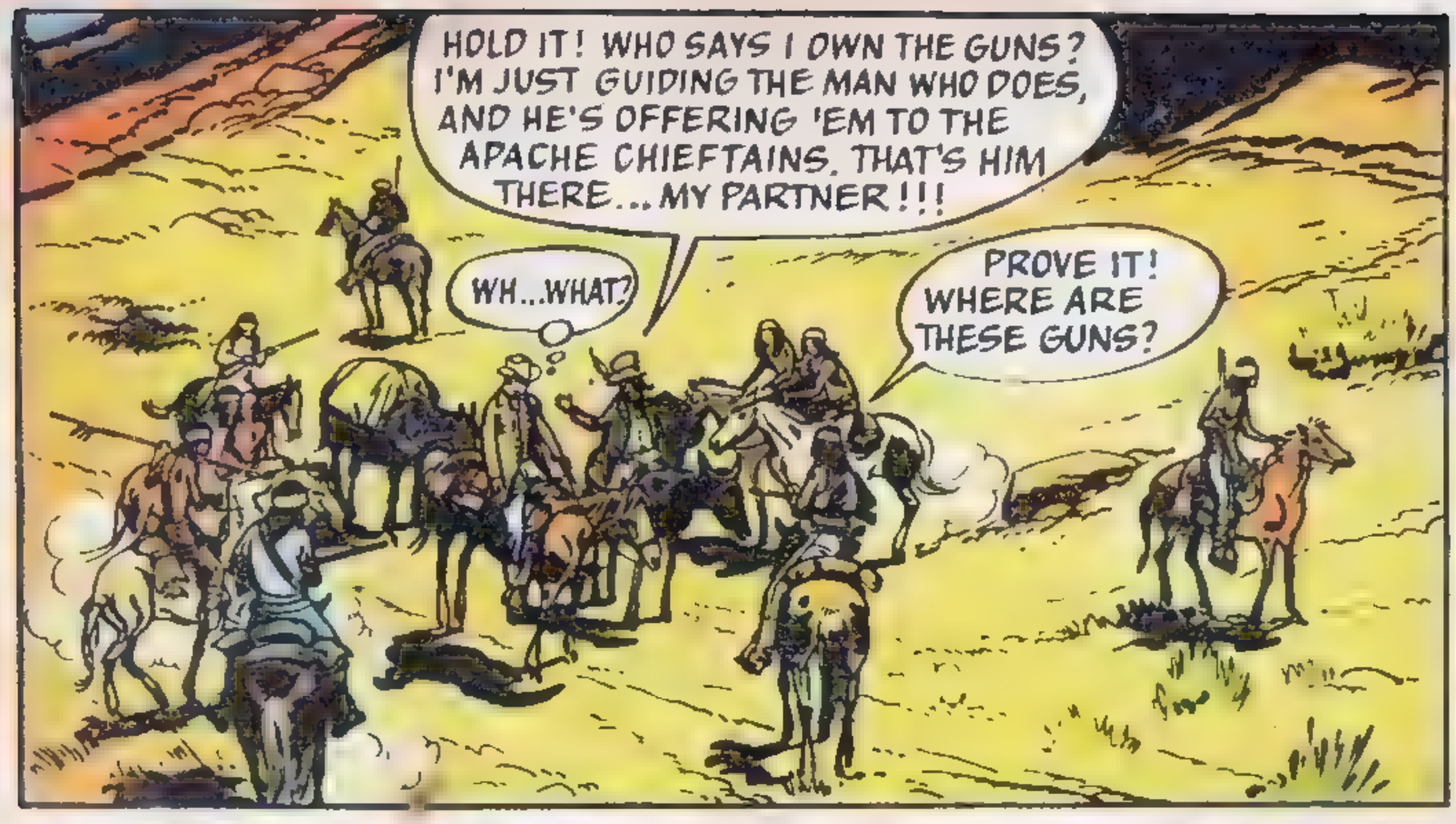

?!? WHY DIDN'T THEY ATTACK BY NIGHT?
MOST LIKELY THEY WANTED TO BE SURE WE WEREN'T BAIT, LURING 'EM INTO A TRAP...


HERE THEY COME... AND FOR PETE'S SAKE, LET THAT COLT ALONE! LEAVE THIS TO ME!

OLD LEATHERNECK HAS TRIED OUR PATIENCE TOO FAR! ALL WHITE MEN MUST DIE... LEATHERNECK TOO!
HUH!


LEATHERNECK? NICE NAME, JIMMY!
MY SCALP WON'T DO YOU MUCH CREDIT, AMIGO...AND IT COULD MEAN YOU GET IN TROUBLE WITH YOUR TRIBAL CHIEFS. THEY'RE FRIENDS OF MINE... I'M ON MY WAY TO OFFER 'EM GUNS, JUST LIKE THE PALEFACE GUNS.

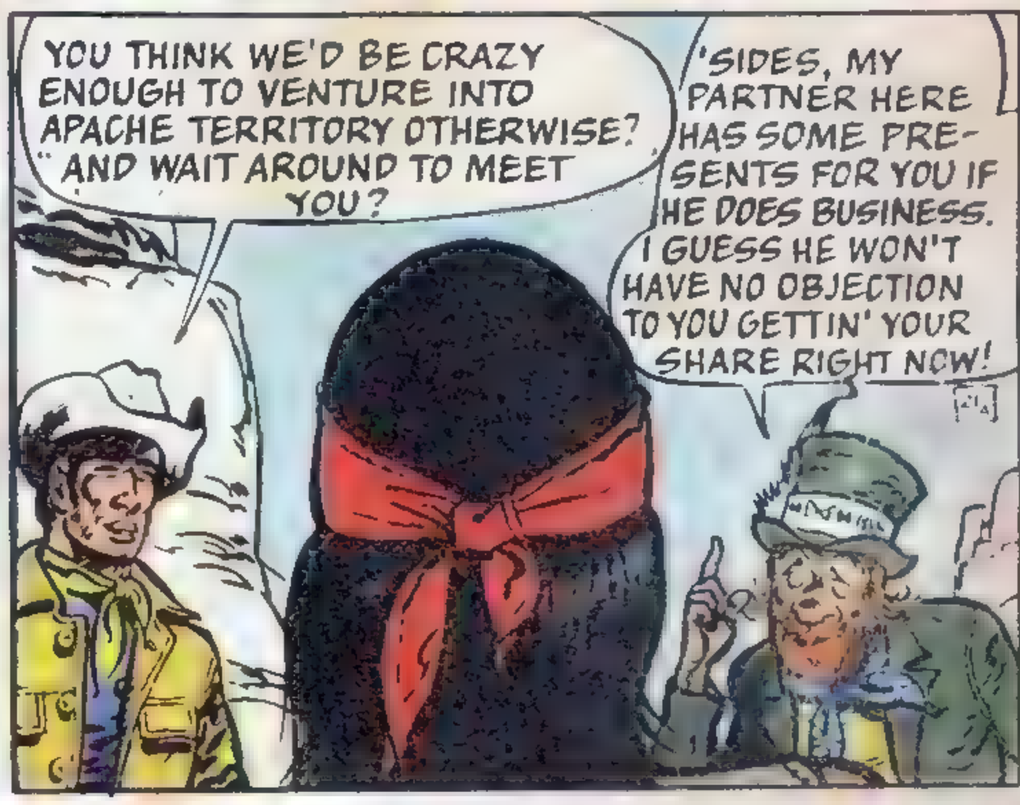

WHAT?
THE TONGUE OF LEATHERNECK IS FORKED! HE HAS NEVER OWNED SO MANY GUNS! HE DIES!


HOLD IT! WHO SAYS I OWN THE GUNS? I'M JUST GUIDING THE MAN WHO DOES, AND HE'S OFFERING 'EM TO THE APACHE CHIEFTAINS. THAT'S HIM THERE... MY PARTNER!!!
WH...WHAT?
PROVE IT! WHERE ARE THESE GUNS?

YOUR TURN, SON... AND MAKE IT SOUND GOOD!
YOU OLD VARMINT!

DOES MY BROTHER TAKE ME FOR A FOOL? THE GUNS ARE SAFELY HIDDEN... I AIM TO SELL THEM AT A PROFIT, NOT GIVE THEM AWAY!

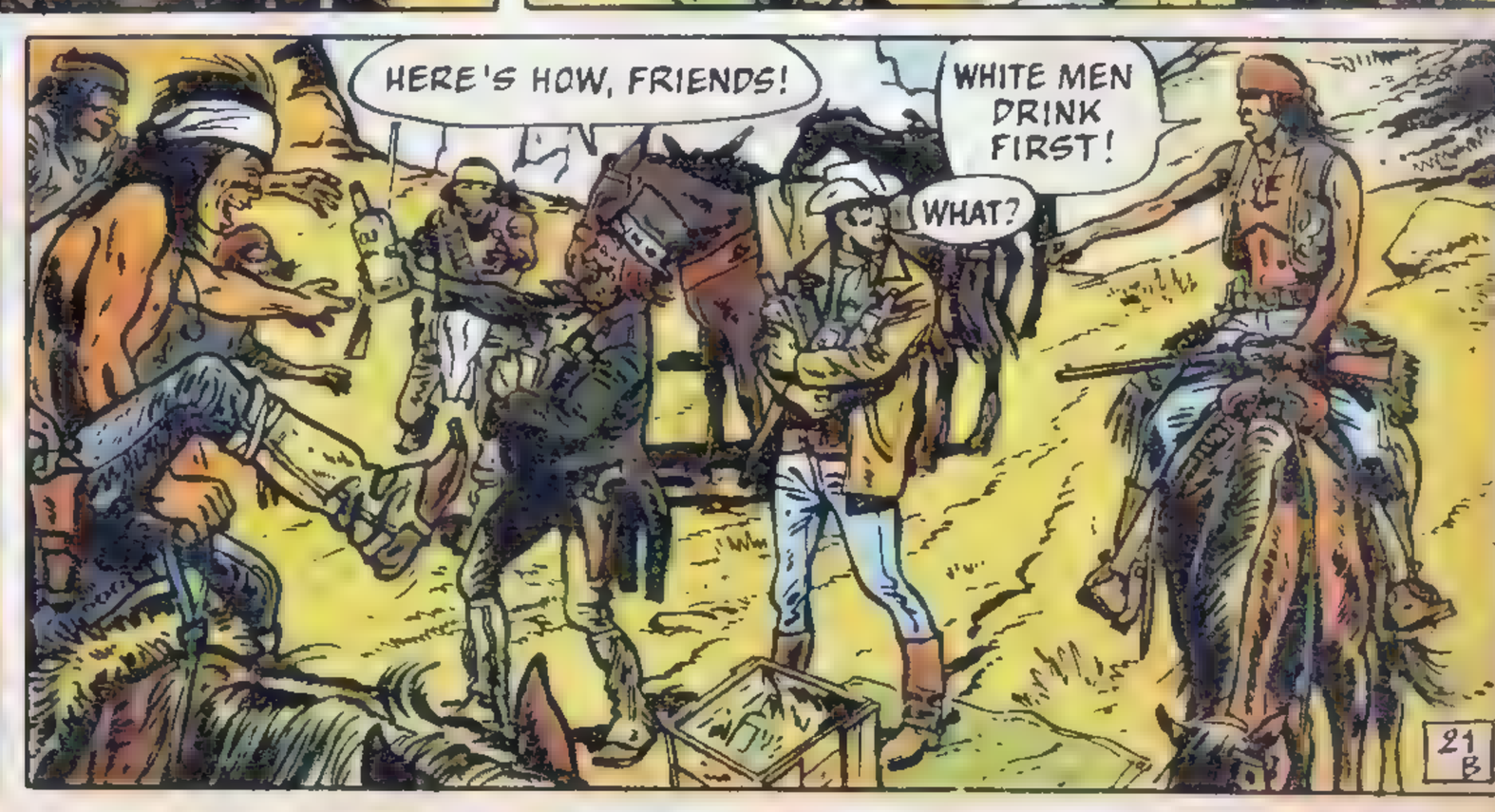
KILL US, THE APACHE WARRIORS WILL NEVER GET MY GUNS... AND NO ONE ELSE WILL DARE OFFER THEM ARMS!
YOUR CHIEFS WON'T FORGIVE YOU IN A HURRY!
YOU COULD BE LYING!


YOU THINK WE'D BE CRAZY ENOUGH TO VENTURE INTO APACHE TERRITORY OTHERWISE? AND WAIT AROUND TO MEET YOU?
'SIDES, MY PARTNER HERE HAS SOME PRESENTS FOR YOU IF HE DOES BUSINESS. I GUESS HE WON'T HAVE NO OBJECTION TO YOU GETTIN' YOUR SHARE RIGHT NOW!

COME ON, PARTNER! HELP ME UNDO THIS LITTLE SURPRISE WE GOT FOR OUR FRIENDS HERE!

YOU OLD DEVIL...SO THIS IS THE KIND OF LITTLE SERVICE YOU DO THE INDIANS! YOU KNOW IT'S ILLEGAL TO SUPPLY THEM WITH LIQUOR!
SHUT YOUR MOUTH, YOU FOOL! THIS IS YOUR BEST HOPE OF SAVING YOUR SCALP!
ANYWAYS, IT AIN'T REAL WHISKEY!

COLORED WATER, WITH JUST ENOUGH LIQUOR TO MASK THE TASTE OF THE NARCOTICS I GOT BACK AT CAMP BOWIE!
HEY! GOOD STUFF THIS WHISKEY!
OLD KENTUCKY


HERE'S HOW, FRIENDS!
WHITE MEN DRINK FIRST!
WHAT?

D... DRINK FIRST?
HE SUSPECTS SOMETHING!
OLD KENTUCKY

DOES MY RED BROTHER NOT TRUST OLD LEATHERNECK? LEATHERNECK WILL DRINK THE GOOD FIREWATER FIRST!
I WILL? BUT I...
DRINK, LEATHERNECK!

ER...WELL, I DUNNO... THE PALEFACE MEDICINE MAN SAID I OUGHTN'T REALLY...
DRINK UP OR I'LL SCALP YOU MYSELF!

OKAY, IF THAT'S HOW IT IS... ER... HERE'S HOW, BOYS!
OLD KENTUCKY

AGAIN!
YUK!
GLUG GLUG

HO! HO! HIC! GOOD STUFF, THIS ...THIS FIREWATER!
99 A

NOW THE APACHES DRINK!

POW
YOU VARMINT... THAT WAS A DIRTY TRICK!

WHY FALEFACE NOT DRINK?
I GUESS ONE OF US NEEDS TO STAY SOBER... IF WE'RE TO SEE YOUR CHIEFS!

CAN MY RED BROTHER TELL ME WHERE TO FIND CHIEF CHARRIBA? I HAVE TO FIND HIM FIRST.
SINCE LITTLE CLOUD SEE CHIEF CHARRIBA, THE SUN HAS SET THREE TIMES. HIM CAMP NEAR DEAD MAN'S SPRING...

HMM... LOOKS LIKE IT'S TAKING EFFECT!
IF I SIT...C... CAN'T GET UP...
FIREWATER BAD... SEND BRAVES TO SLEEP, NOT MAKE THEM CRAZY!
22 B

FORKED TONGUE! VIPER! HEART OF A DOG! YOU TRICK RED MEN! MAKE THEM SLEEP WITH BAD FIREWATER, SO WHITE MEN KILL THEM!

ANOTHER BEAUTIFUL FRIENDSHIP RUINED BY LIQUOR!

B...BUT I... I DRANK THE WHISKEY! I'M YOUR FRIEND!

HELL

YAARP

POW

HELP!

UOOOH!

CLAC

HEY, JIMMY! THIS IS NO TIME TO GO FAINTING!...

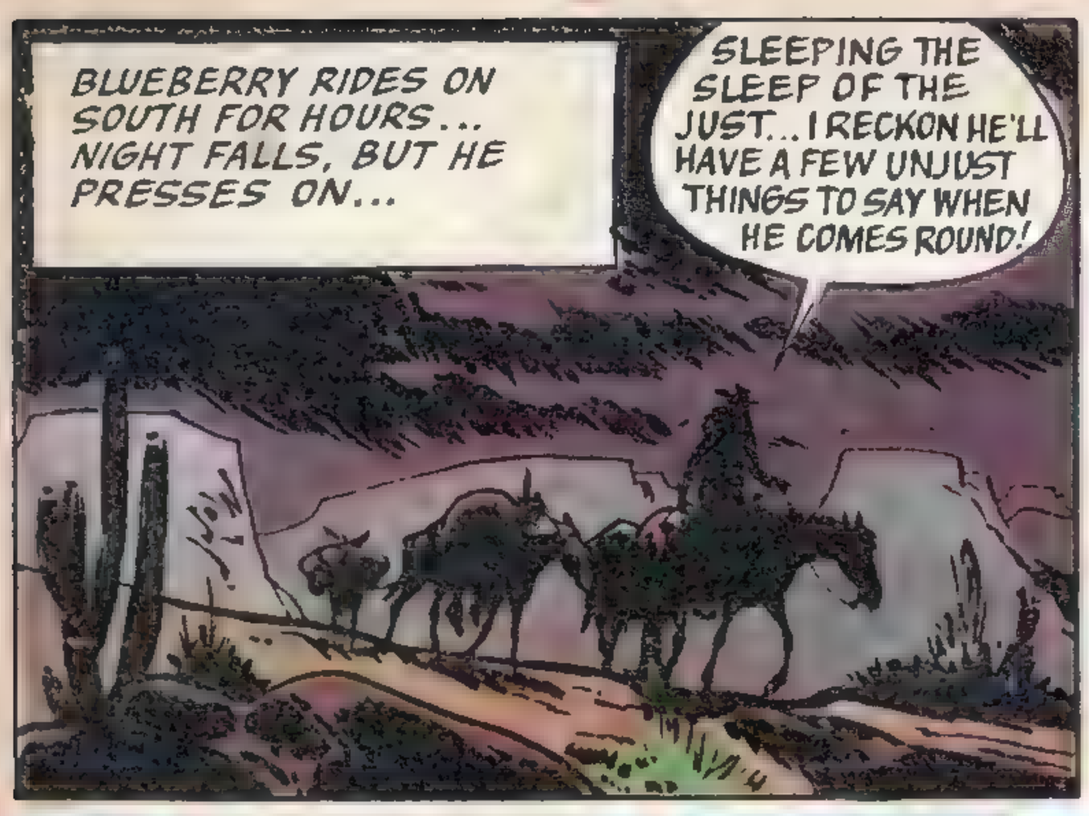
WHY, HE DIDN'T FAINT! HE'S ASLEEP!

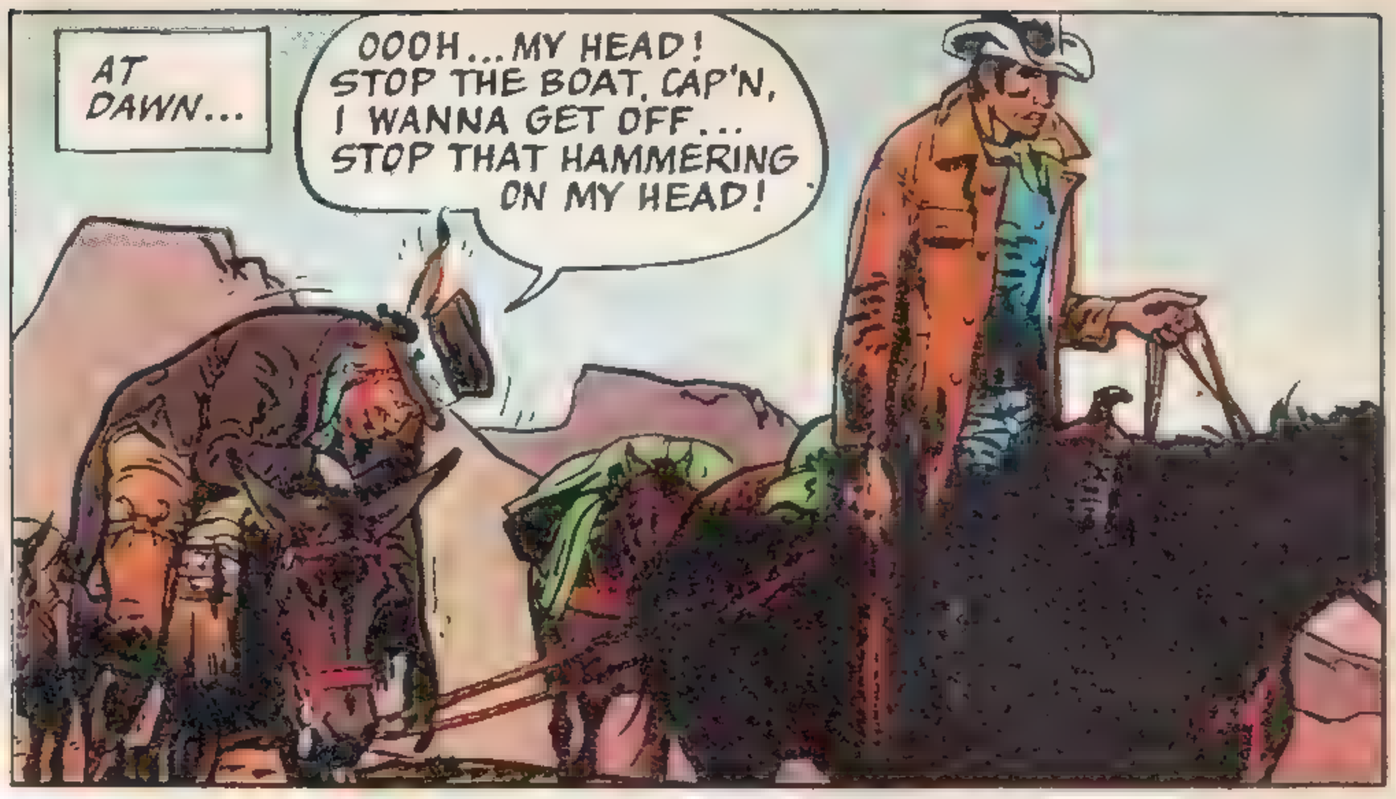
JUST LIKE HIS FRIENDLY REDSKIN CUSTOMER! HMM! BETTER NOT WAIT TILL THIS BUNCH WAKE UP! I JUST HOPE JIM'S DRUGS WERE BETTER THAN HIS WHISKEY!

ONE LAST PRECAUTION...

GIDDAP! GIDDAP THERE!

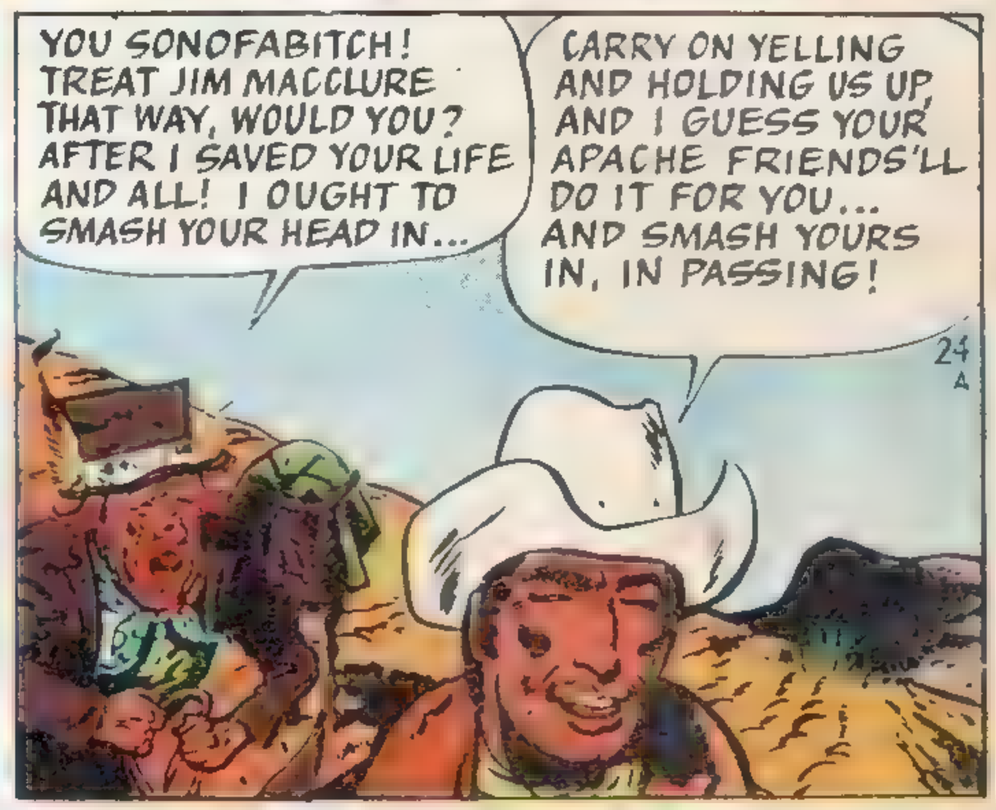
WE'LL BE WELL AWAY BEFORE THEY CATCH THEIR PONIES.

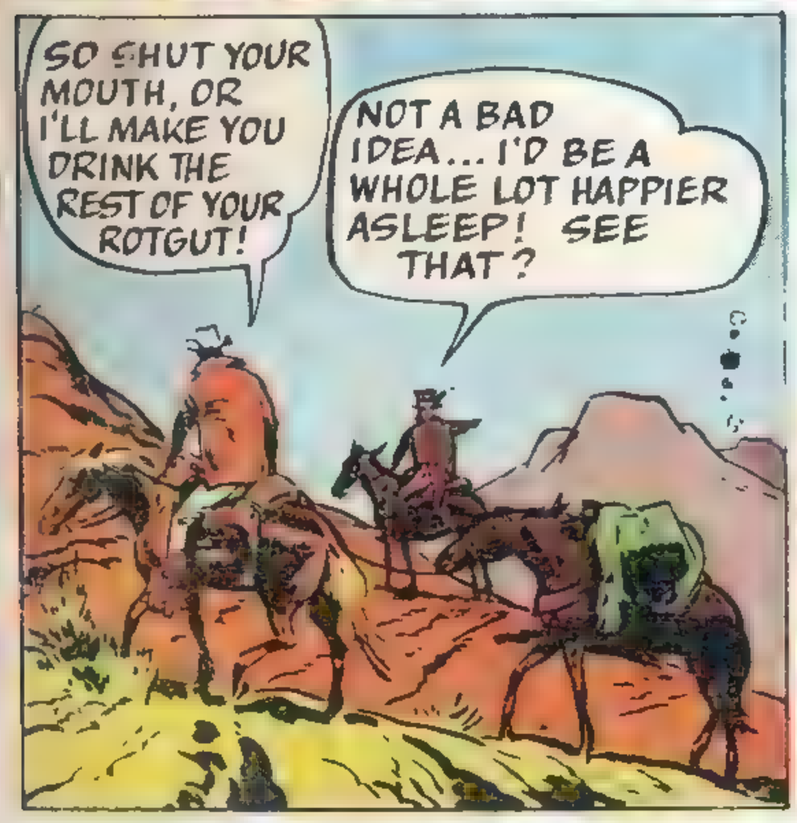

BLUEBERRY RIDES ON SOUTH FOR HOURS... NIGHT FALLS, BUT HE PRESSES ON...
SLEEPING THE SLEEP OF THE JUST... I RECKON HE'LL HAVE A FEW UNJUST THINGS TO SAY WHEN HE COMES ROUND!


AT DAWN...
OOOH... MY HEAD! STOP THE BOAT, CAP'N, I WANNA GET OFF... STOP THAT HAMMERING ON MY HEAD!

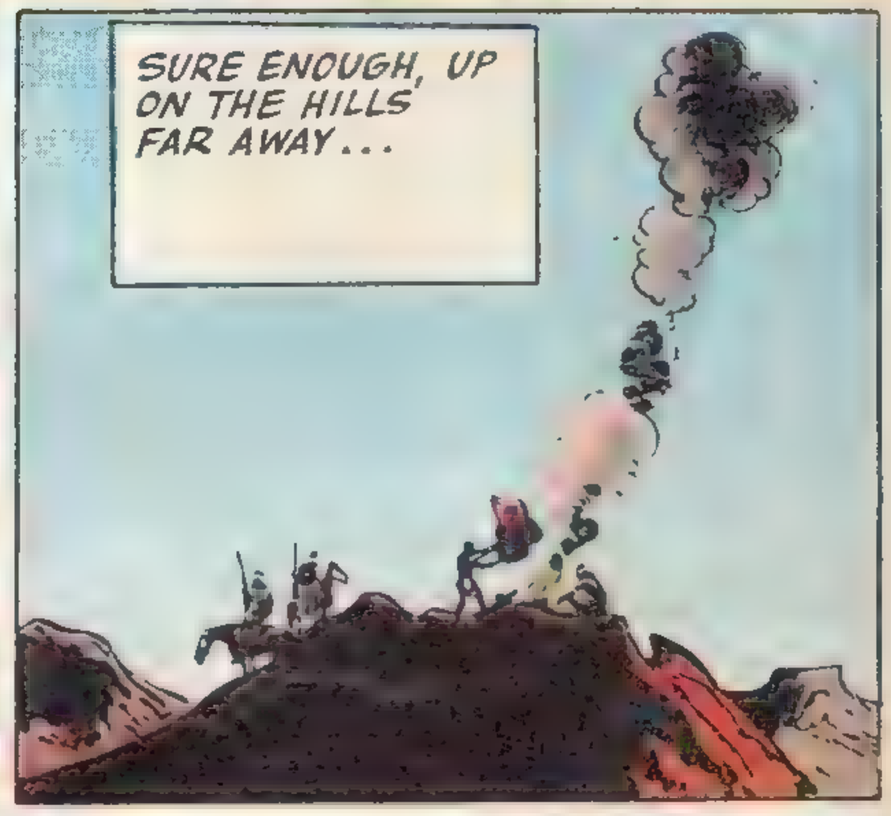
?!? OOOH!!!

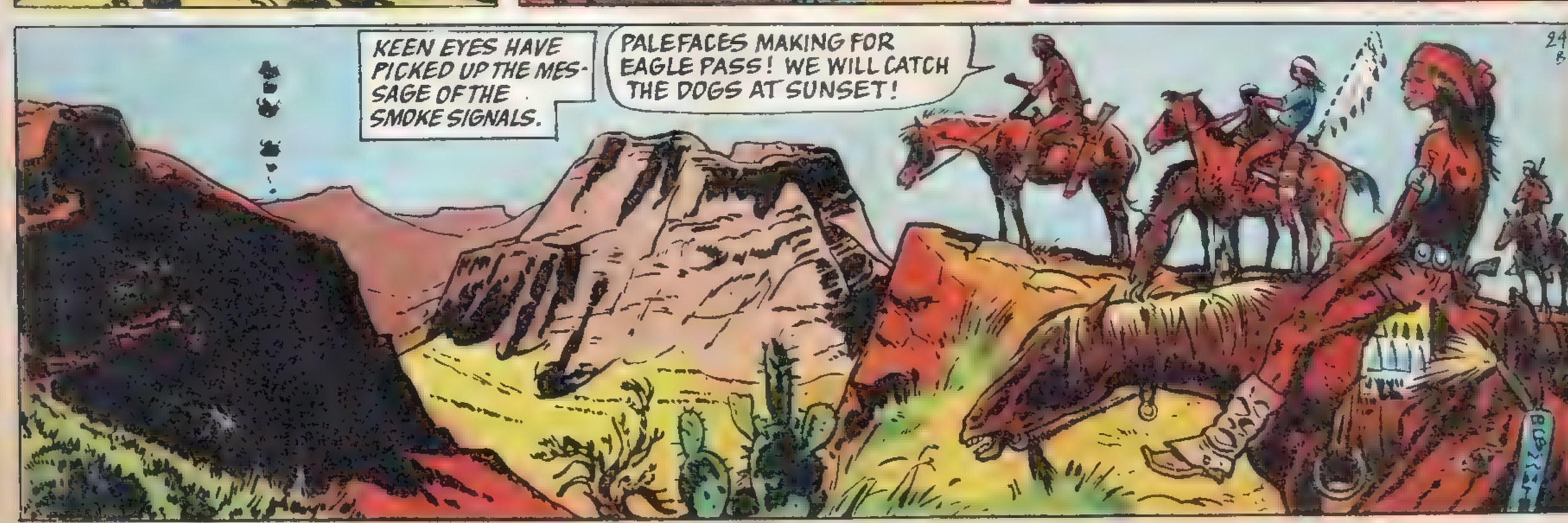
WHAT THE... ???


YOU SONOFABITCH! TREAT JIM MACCLURE THAT WAY, WOULD YOU? AFTER I SAVED YOUR LIFE AND ALL! I OUGHT TO SMASH YOUR HEAD IN...
CARRY ON YELLING AND HOLDING US UP, AND I GUESS YOUR APACHE FRIENDS'LL DO IT FOR YOU... AND SMASH YOURS IN, IN PASSING!
24 A

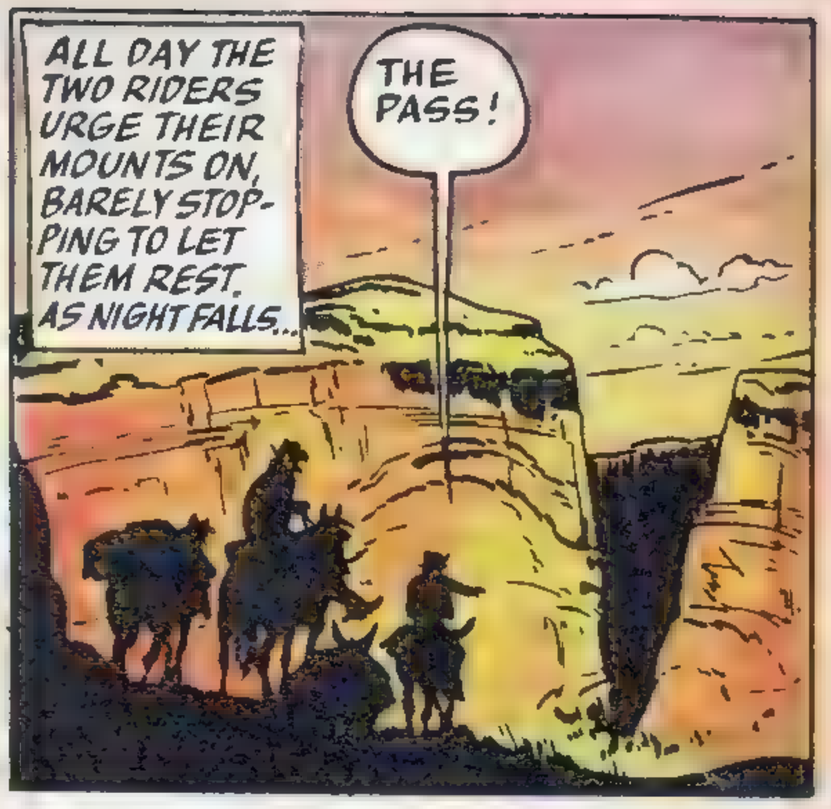

SO SHUT YOUR MOUTH, OR I'LL MAKE YOU DRINK THE REST OF YOUR ROTGUT!
NOT A BAD IDEA... I'D BE A WHOLE LOT HAPPIER ASLEEP! SEE THAT?

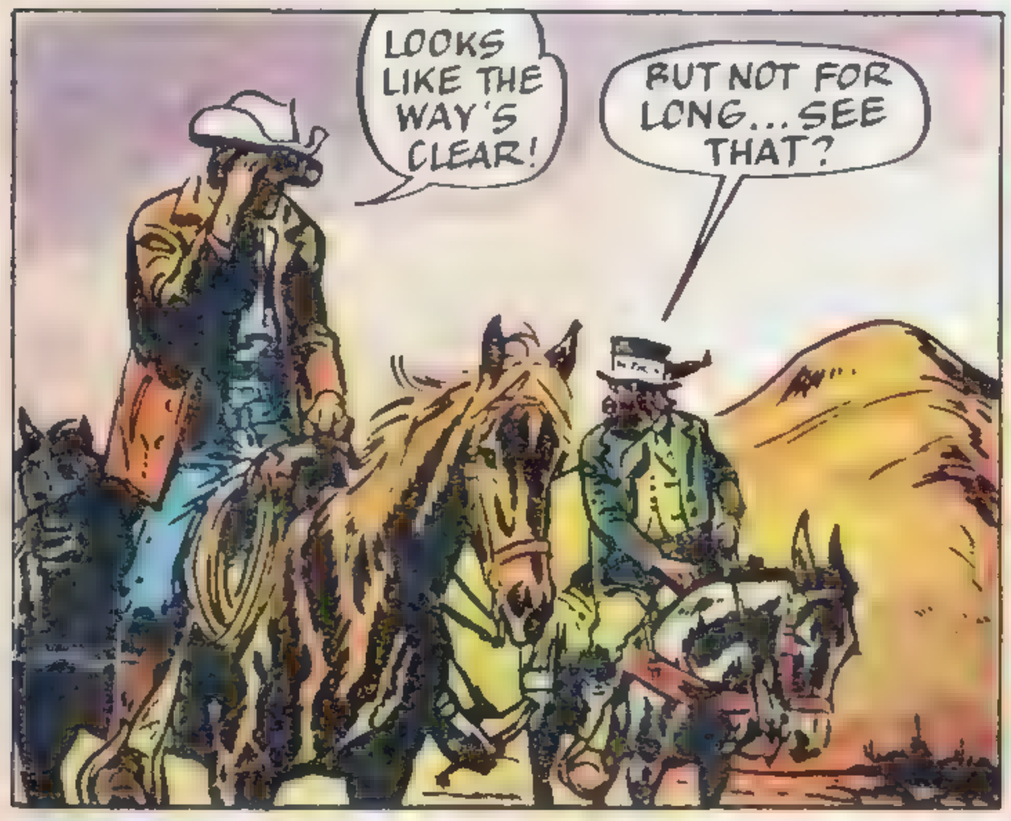
HELL! SMOKE SIGNALS! YOU THINK LITTLE CLOUD AND HIS MEN ARE AWAKE TOO?
YEAH... AND LIKE THEM SIGNALS SHOW, THEY AIN'T THE ONLY APACHES HEREABOUTS!


SURE ENOUGH, UP ON THE HILLS FAR AWAY...

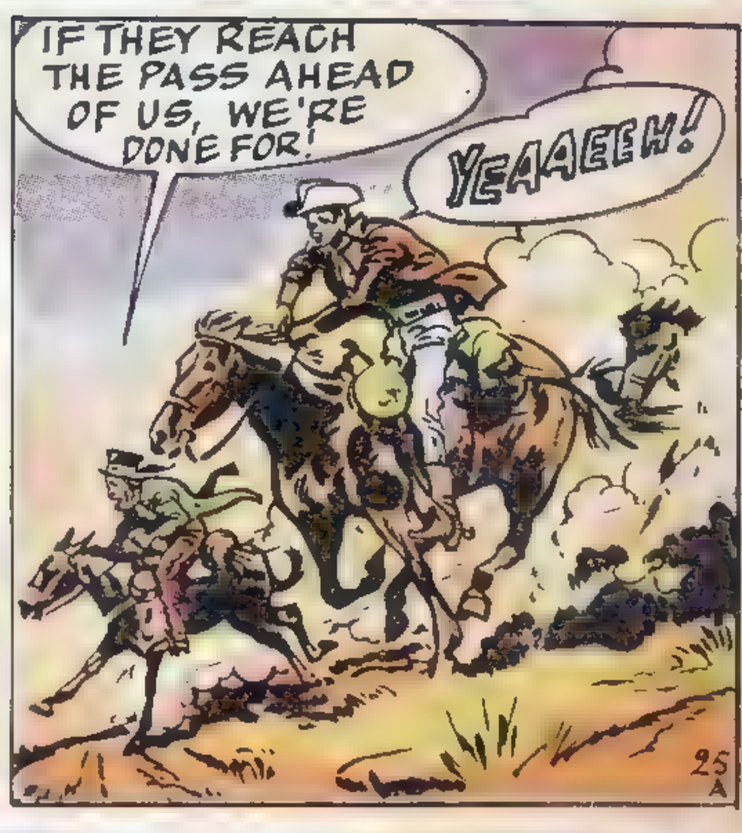

KEEN EYES HAVE PICKED UP THE MESSAGE OF THE SMOKE SIGNALS.
PALEFACES MAKING FOR EAGLE PASS! WE WILL CATCH THE DOGS AT SUNSET!
24 B

YOU MARK MY WORDS, SON, WE'LL HAVE MORE REDSKINS AFTER US IN NO TIME! COCHISE LEFT A SIZEABLE REAR-GUARD BEHIND HIM!
WE MUST REACH EAGLE PASS BEFORE THE INDIANS!

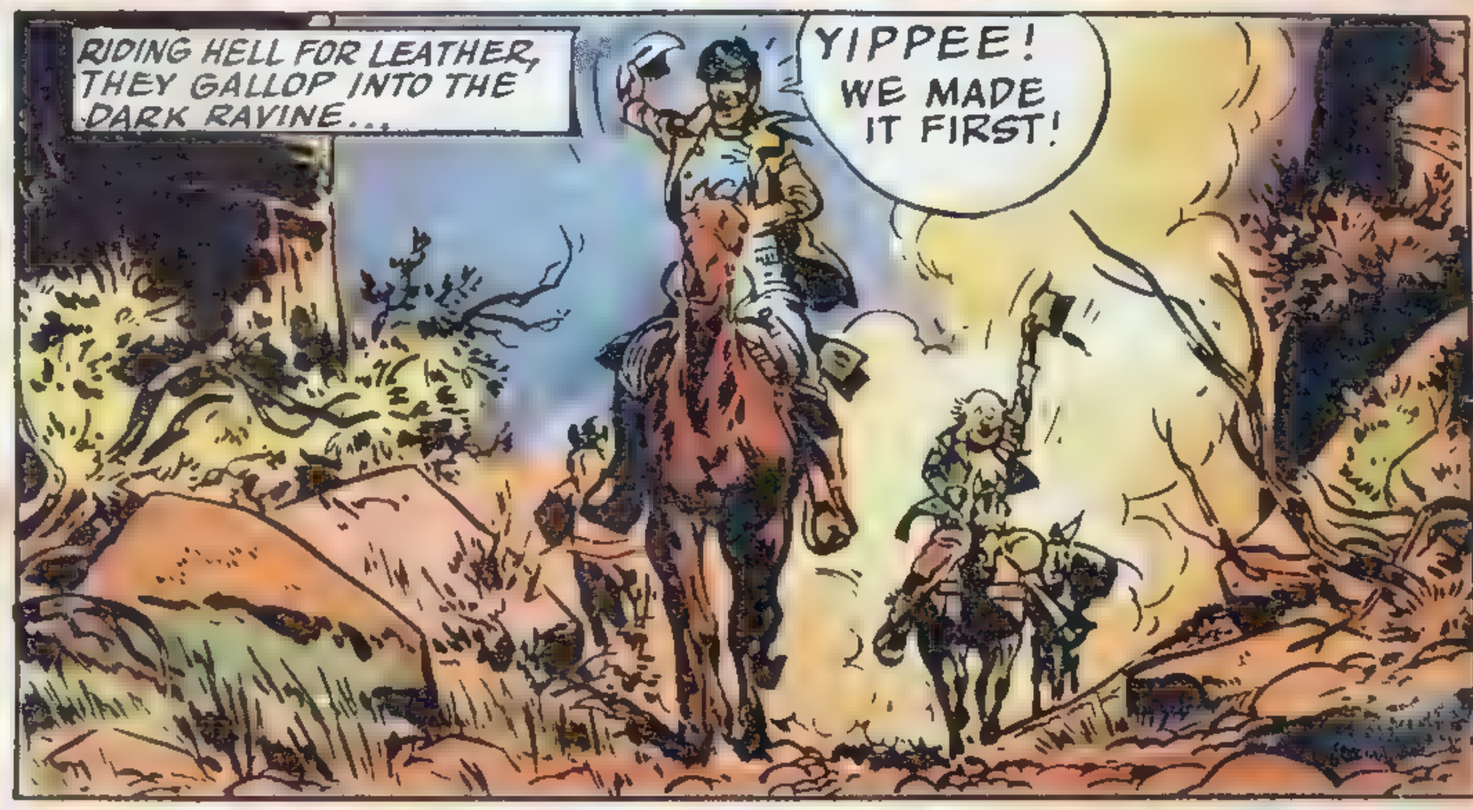

ALL DAY THE TWO RIDERS URGE THEIR MOUNTS ON, BARELY STOPPING TO LET THEM REST, AS NIGHT FALLS...
THE PASS!


LOOKS LIKE THE WAY'S CLEAR!
BUT NOT FOR LONG...SEE THAT?

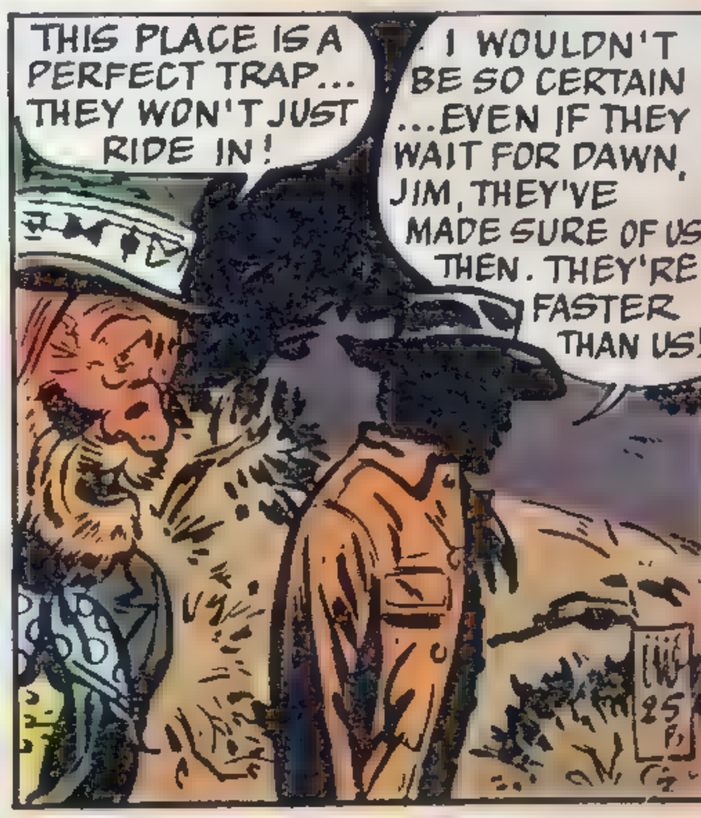
HM? IS IT THE WIND, OR...?
HORSEMEN, RAISING THAT DUST! APACHES!


IF THEY REACH THE PASS AHEAD OF US, WE'RE DONE FOR!
YEAAEEH!

LUCKY THE REDSKINS DON'T KNOW THERE'S ONLY TWO OF US...WITH OUR MULES, WE RAISE AS MUCH DUST AS A WHOLE CAVALRY SECTION!
THAT'S OUR ONLY CHANCE, SON! IT'S NEARLY DARK. SO LONG AS THEY DON'T KNOW HOW FEW WE ARE, THEY WON'T DARE ATTACK.


RIDING HELL FOR LEATHER, THEY GALLOP INTO THE DARK RAVINE...
YIPPEE! WE MADE IT FIRST!

BETTER STOP AND REST THE ANIMALS.
PHEW! LET'S HOPE WE GET A BREATHING SPACE TOO!


THIS PLACE IS A PERFECT TRAP... THEY WON'T JUST RIDE IN!
I WOULDN'T BE SO CERTAIN ...EVEN IF THEY WAIT FOR DAWN, JIM, THEY'VE MADE SURE OF US THEN. THEY'RE FASTER THAN US!

OUR ONLY HOPE IS TO REACH CHARRIBA'S CAMP AND PLACE OURSELVES UNDER CROWE'S PROTECTION, BEFORE THE COYOTES CATCH US UP!

YEAH... BUT WE WON'T ESCAPE 'EM, OR LEASTWAYS...

LIGHTING A FIRE? YOU'RE CRAZY! YOU'LL BRING 'EM RIGHT DOWN ON US!

YOU SHUT YOUR MOUTH AND HELP ME!

?!!?

IF WE WANT TO SLOW THEM INJUNS DOWN, WE GOTTA BLUFF 'EM. MAKE 'EM THINK WE'RE A LARGE PARTY! COME ON... HELP ME BUILD FIRES!

AND AT THE MOUTH OF THE RAVINE...

STOP!

WHY DOES CHIEF TANA WAIT? WILL HE LET THE PALEFACES ESCAPE NOW?

MY BROTHER IS YOUNG, HIS TONGUE IS QUICK! BUT EVEN A LYNX MIGHT LOSE HIS WAY IN THAT DARK RAVINE! TO GO IN BLINDFOLD... THAT IS WHAT OUR ENEMY WANTS!

LOOK... FIRES!

SIX FIRES! THE PALEFACES ARE AT LEAST THREE TIMES THE FINGERS OF TWO HANDS!

THEY PITCH CAMP, LIGHT FIRES... THEY KNOW THEY NEED NOT FEAR US.

IS TANA AFRAID?

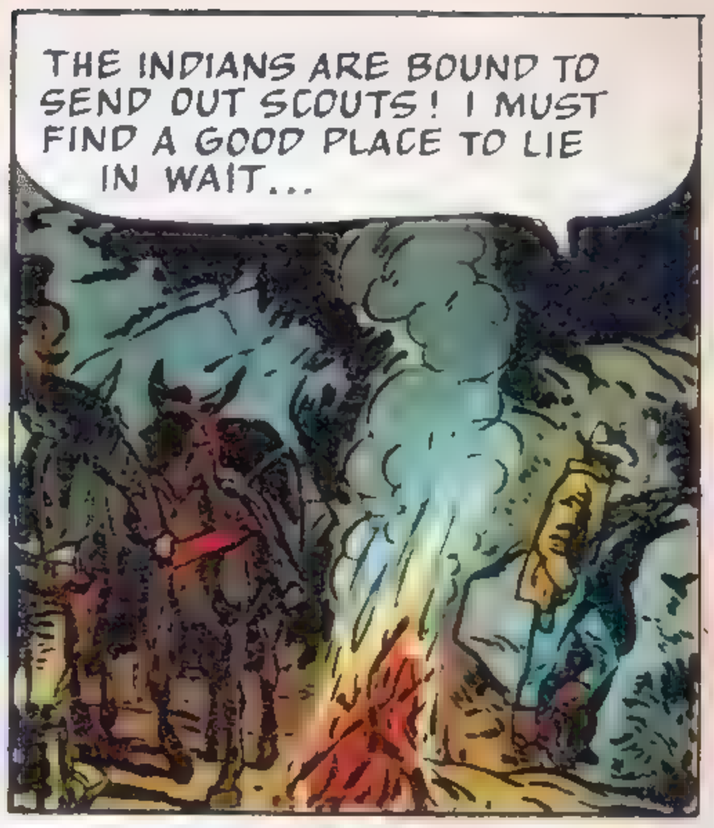
LESS THAN A MILE AWAY...

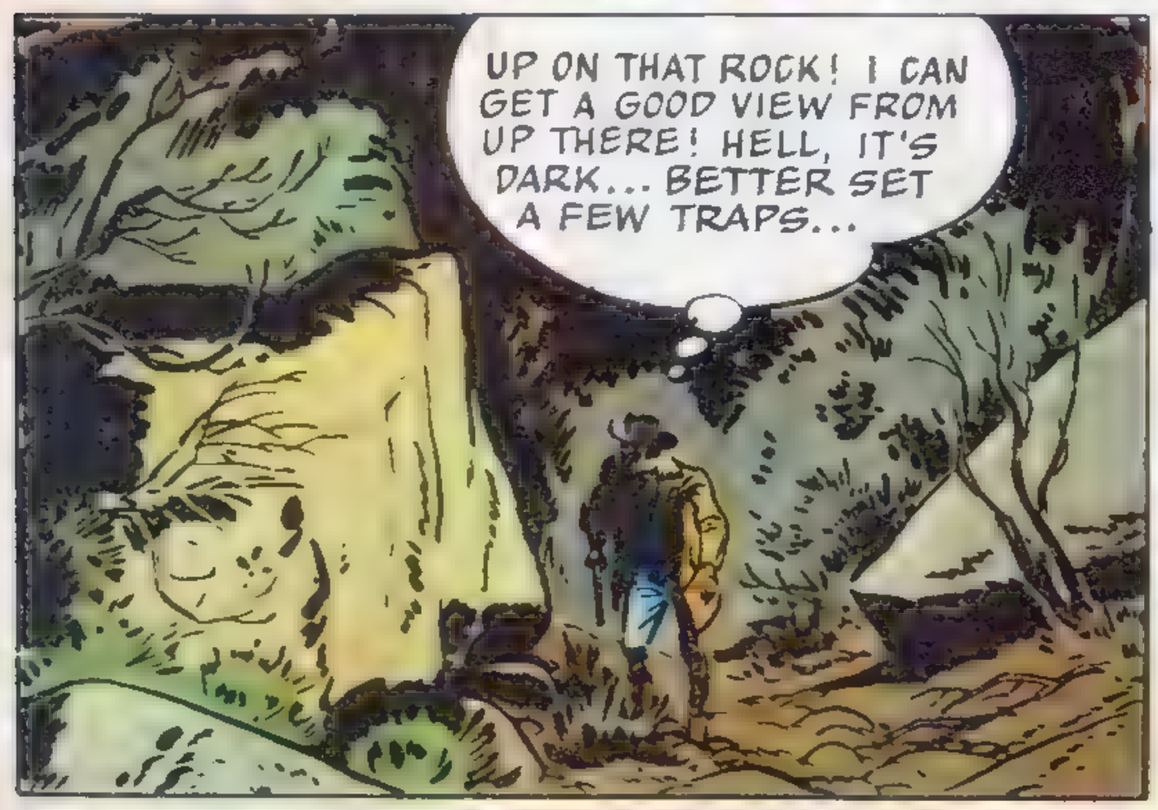
WE MUST GET MOVING, SON! PUT UP TENTS... MAKE IT LOOK LIKE THERE'S AT LEAST THIRTY OF US HERE!

I JUST HOPE YOU'RE RIGHT... IF THE APACHES WILL WASTE TIME SCOUTING AROUND, WE CAN GET WELL AHEAD OF THEM BY DAWN!

MY BROTHER IS BRAVE, BUT IF HE WILL LISTEN TO NO OTHER VOICE BUT HIS OWN, HE WILL DIE YOUNG! WE WILL LET THE PALEFACES FALL ASLEEP, THEN ATTACK UNDER COVER OF DARKNESS... BUT AS CIELITO IS SO BOLD, LET HIM CREEP UP TO THE PALEFACE CAMP AND TELL US HOW MANY THEY ARE, AND WHERE BEST TO ATTACK...

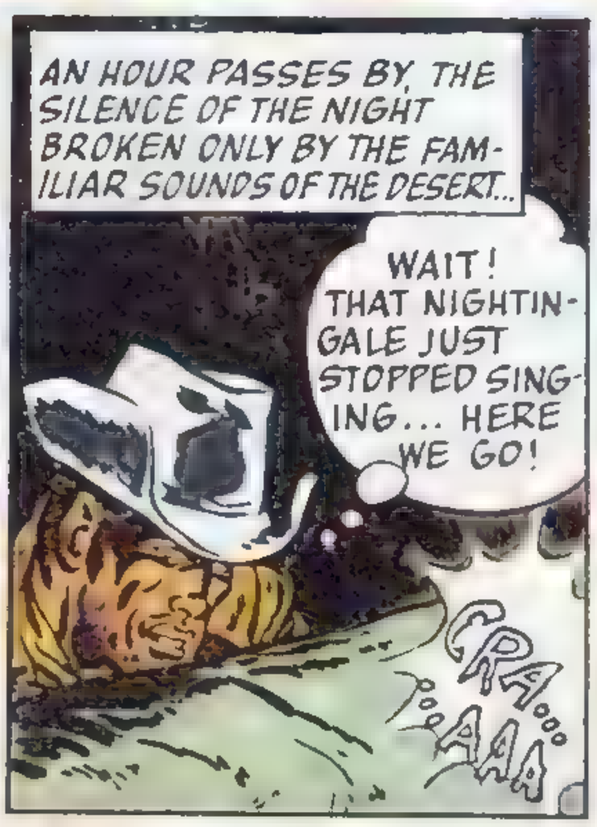
STILL NO SIGN OF 'EM? I GUESS WE TRICKED THE COYOTES, SON! WE CAN START OUT... OUR ANIMALS ARE RESTED.
YOU TAKE THE MULES ON AHEAD. MY HORSE IS FASTER; I'LL COVER YOUR RETREAT.

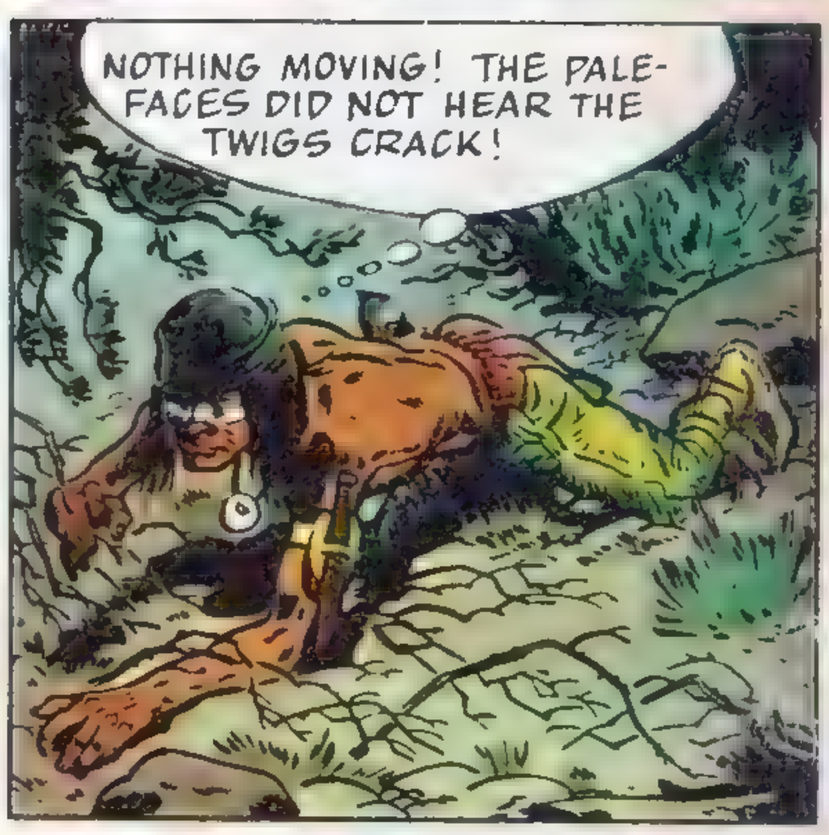

THE INDIANS ARE BOUND TO SEND OUT SCOUTS! I MUST FIND A GOOD PLACE TO LIE IN WAIT...

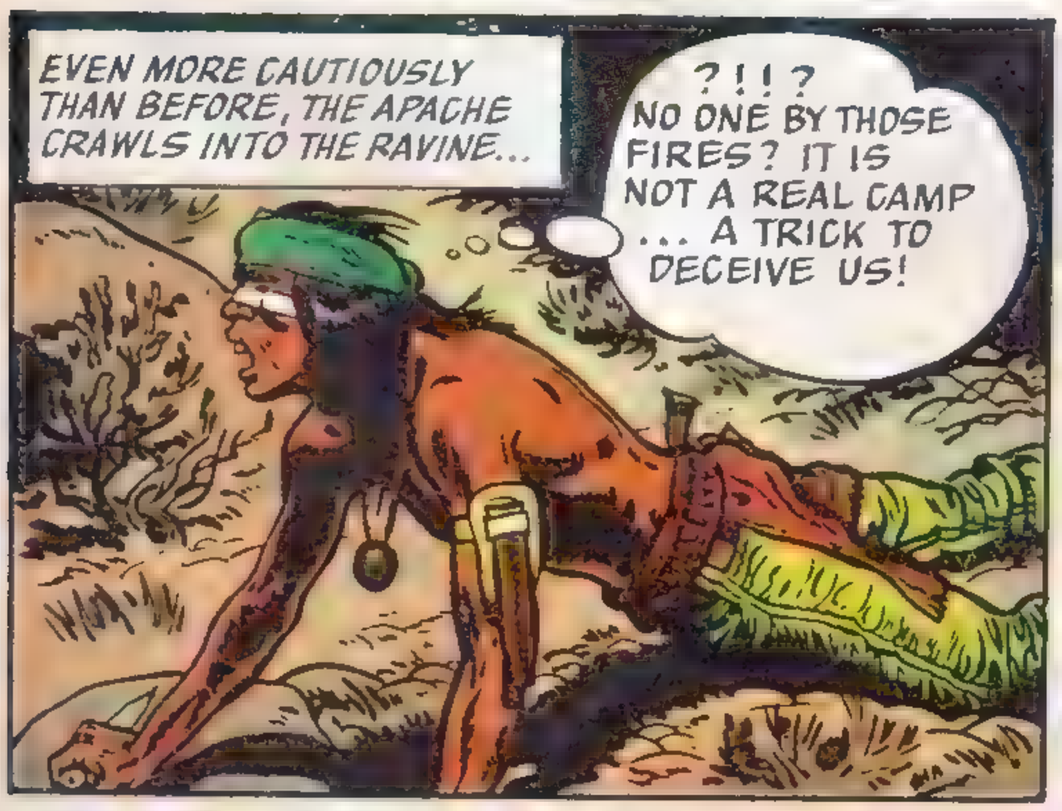

UP ON THAT ROCK! I CAN GET A GOOD VIEW FROM UP THERE! HELL, IT'S DARK... BETTER SET A FEW TRAPS...

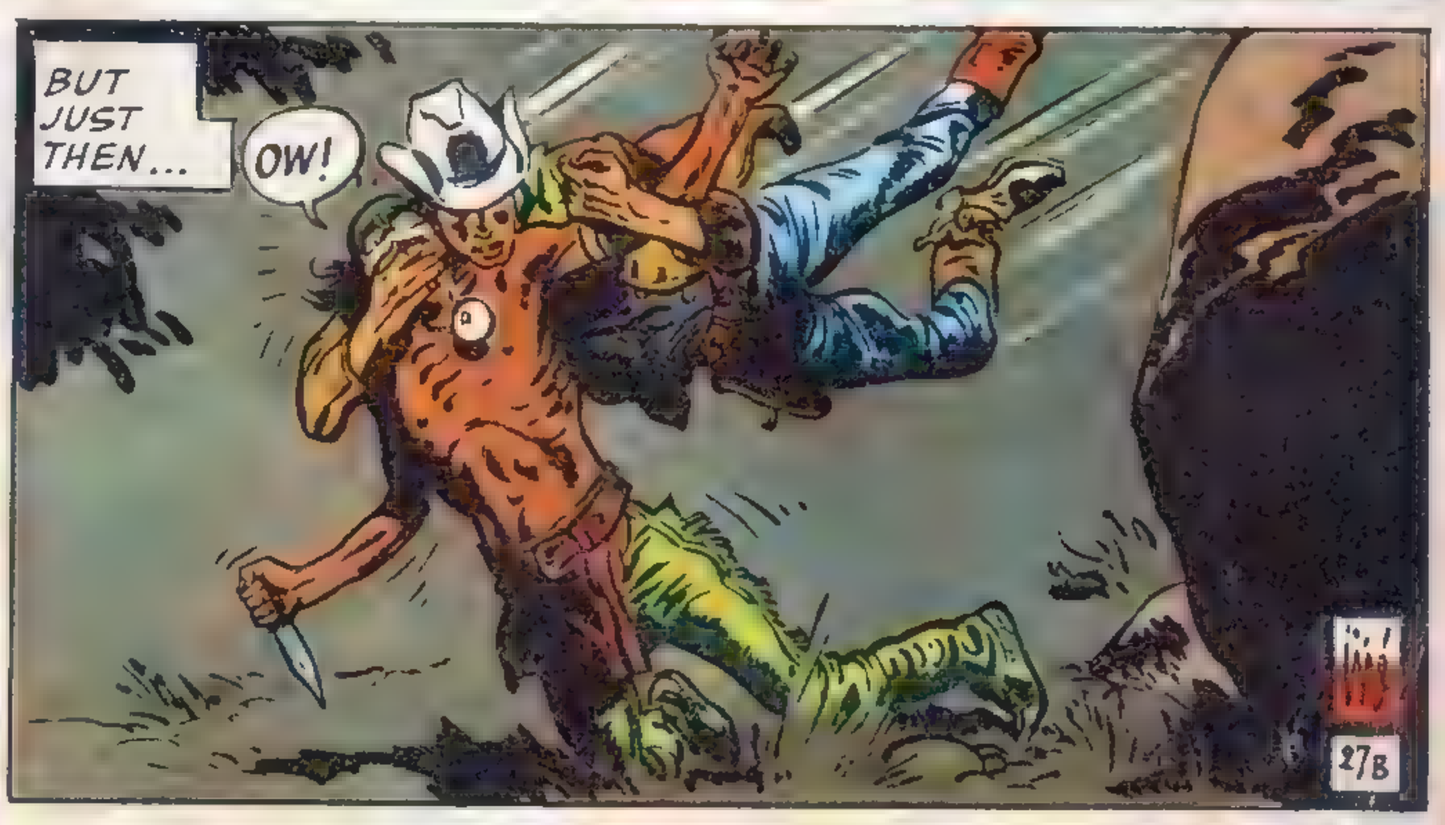
NO ONE COULD CROSS THOSE TWIGS UN-HEARD!

THAT'S MY ALARM SYSTEM SET... NOW TO WAIT!

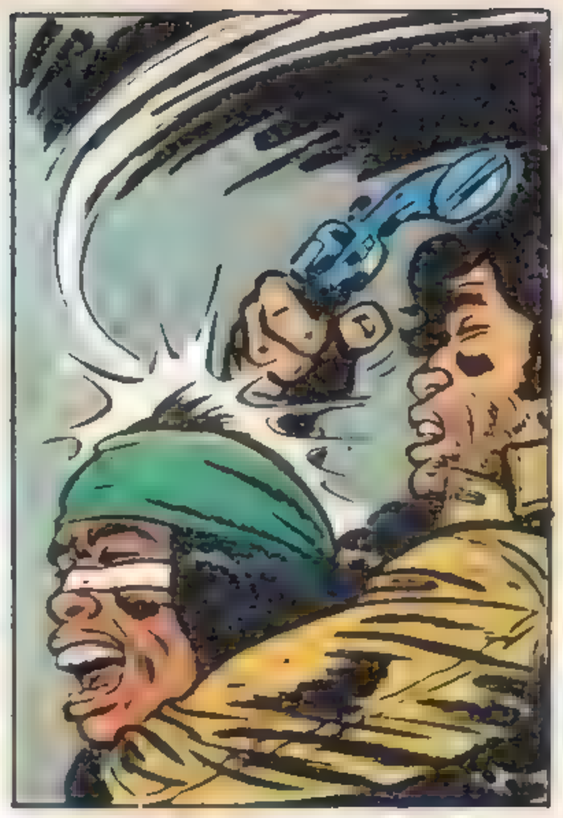

AN HOUR PASSES BY, THE SILENCE OF THE NIGHT BROKEN ONLY BY THE FAMILIAR SOUNDS OF THE DESERT...
WAIT! THAT NIGHTINGALE JUST STOPPED SINGING... HERE WE GO!
CRA... POOAA

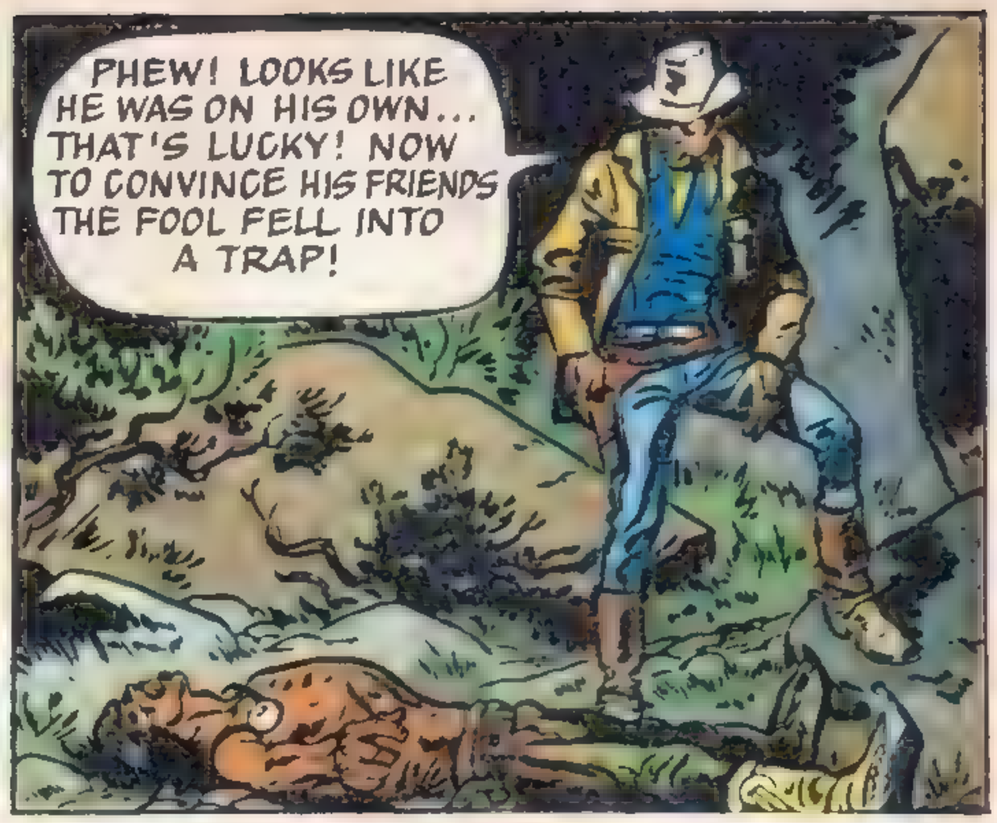

NOTHING MOVING! THE PALE-FACES DID NOT HEAR THE TWIGS CRACK!

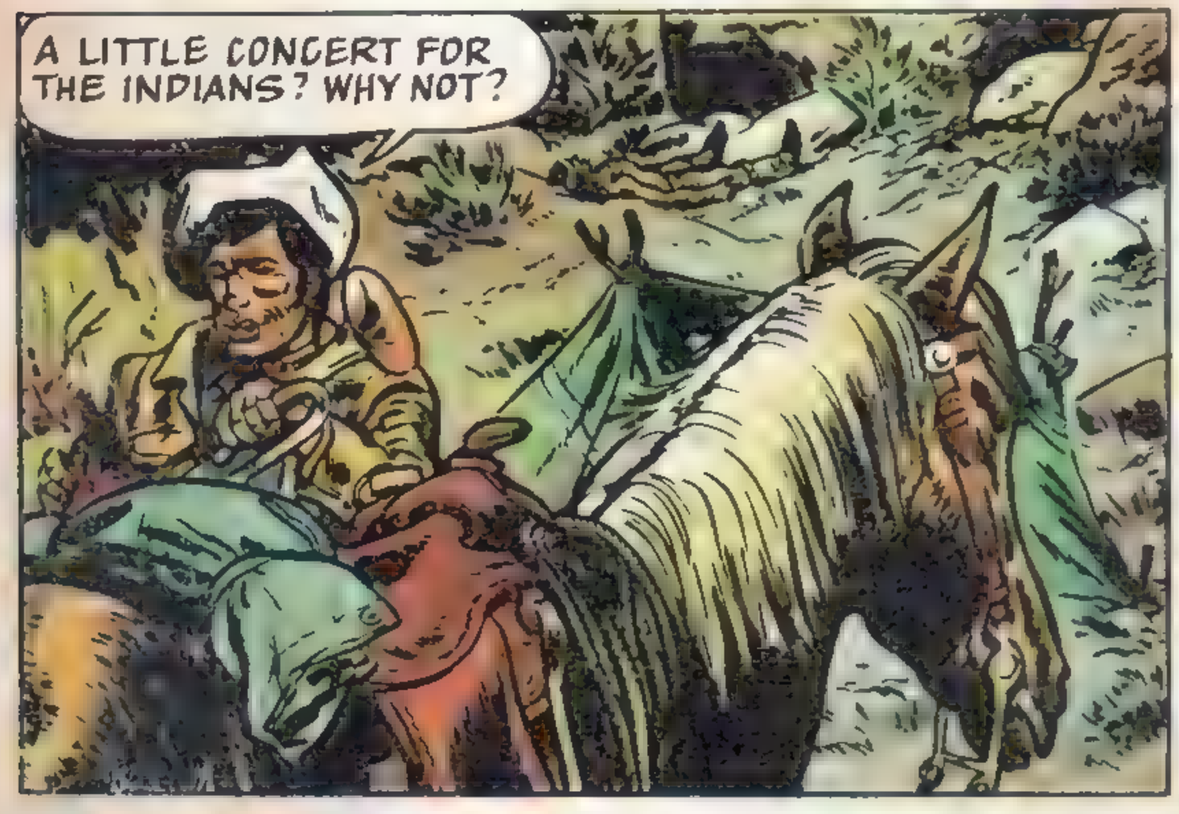

EVEN MORE CAUTIOUSLY THAN BEFORE, THE APACHE CRAWLS INTO THE RAVINE...
?!!? NO ONE BY THOSE FIRES? IT IS NOT A REAL CAMP ... A TRICK TO DECEIVE US!

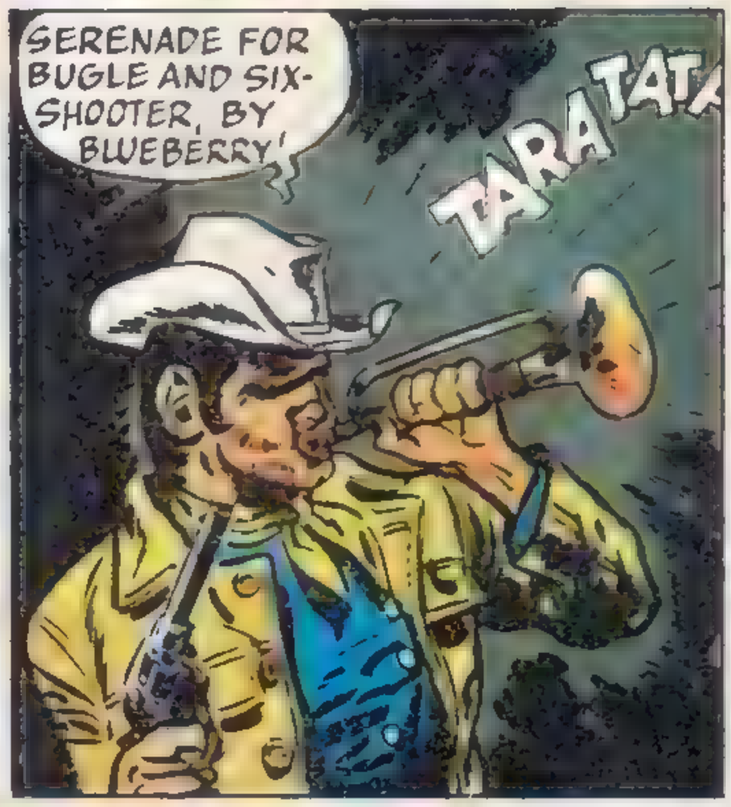

BUT JUST THEN...
OW!

RRRR!




PHEW! LOOKS LIKE HE WAS ON HIS OWN... THAT'S LUCKY! NOW TO CONVINCE HIS FRIENDS THE FOOL FELL INTO A TRAP!


A LITTLE CONCERT FOR THE INDIANS? WHY NOT?

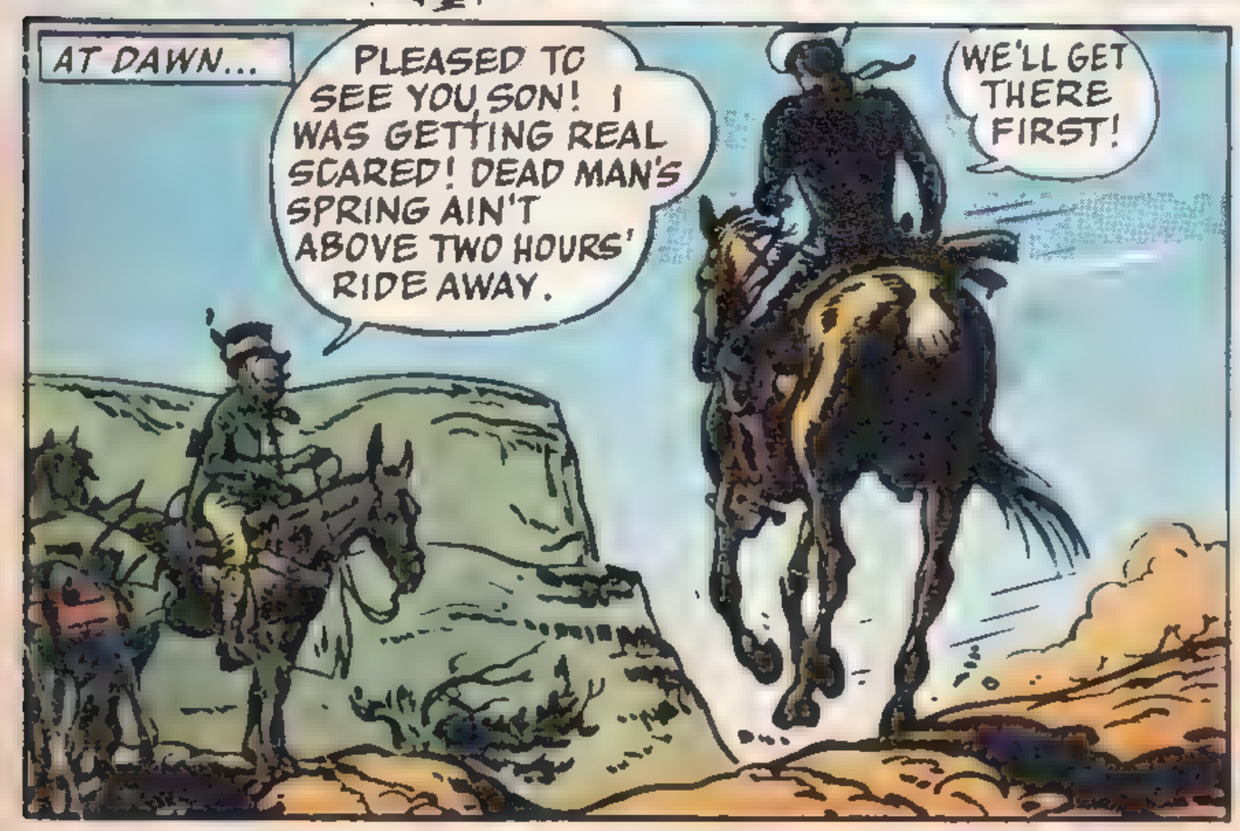

SERENADE FOR BUGLE AND SIX-SHOOTER, BY BLUEBERRY!
TARATATA

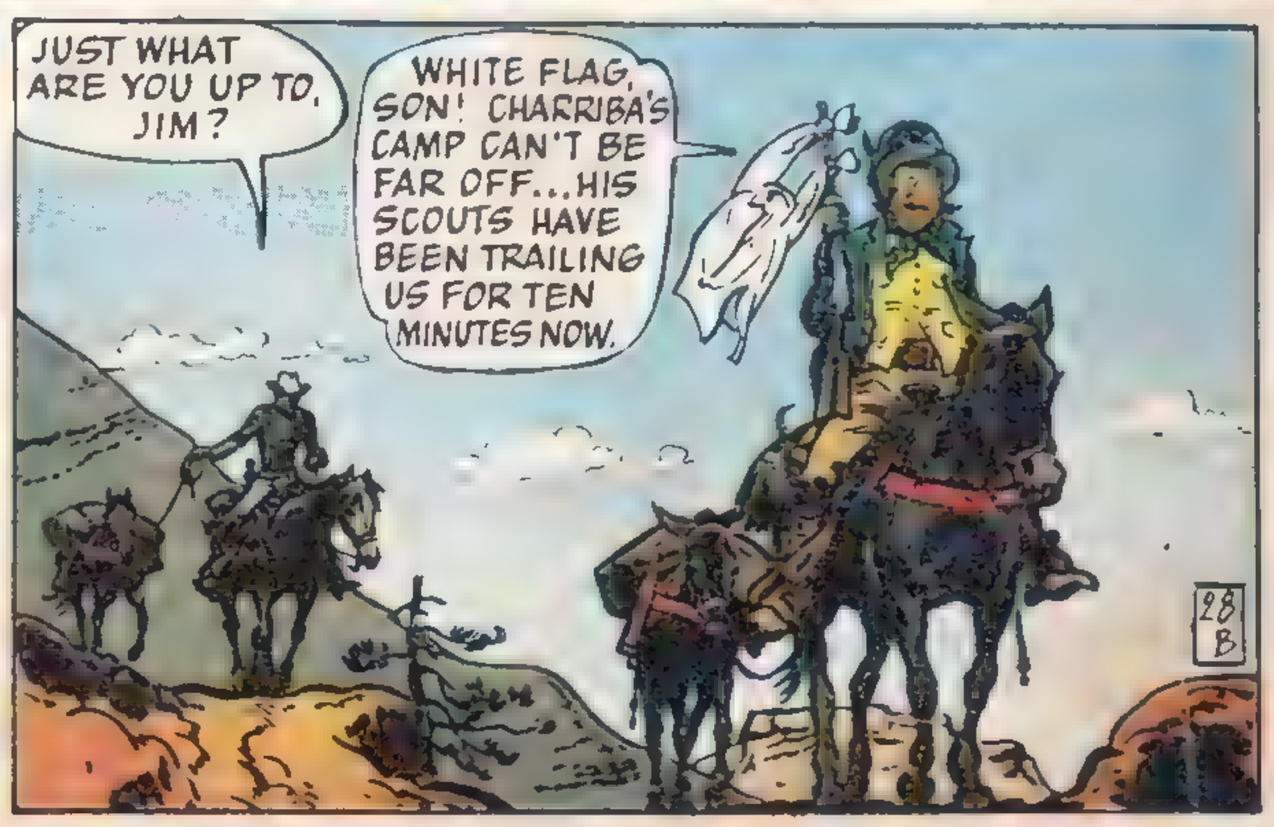
TARATA
POW
POW

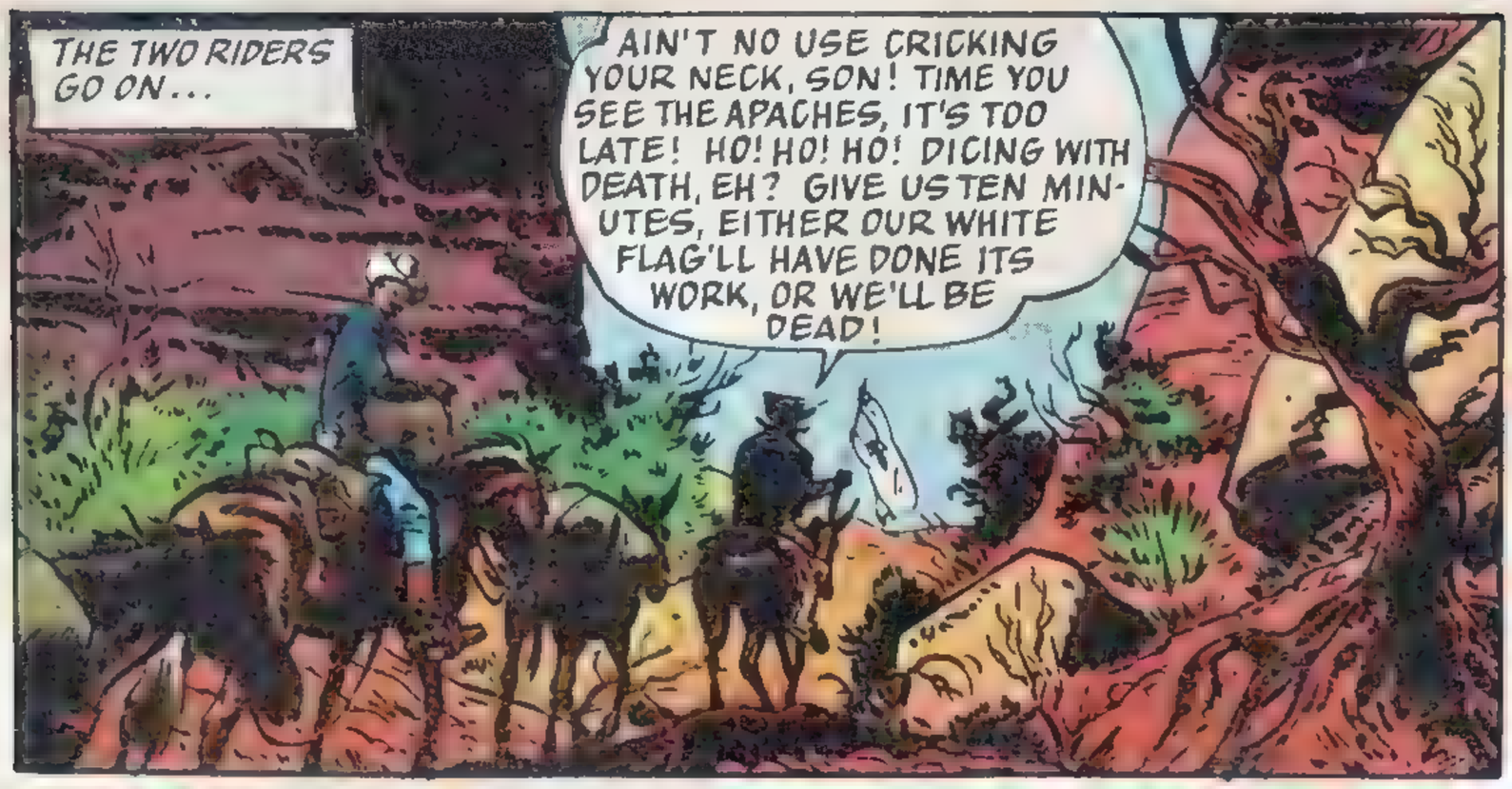
POW
POW

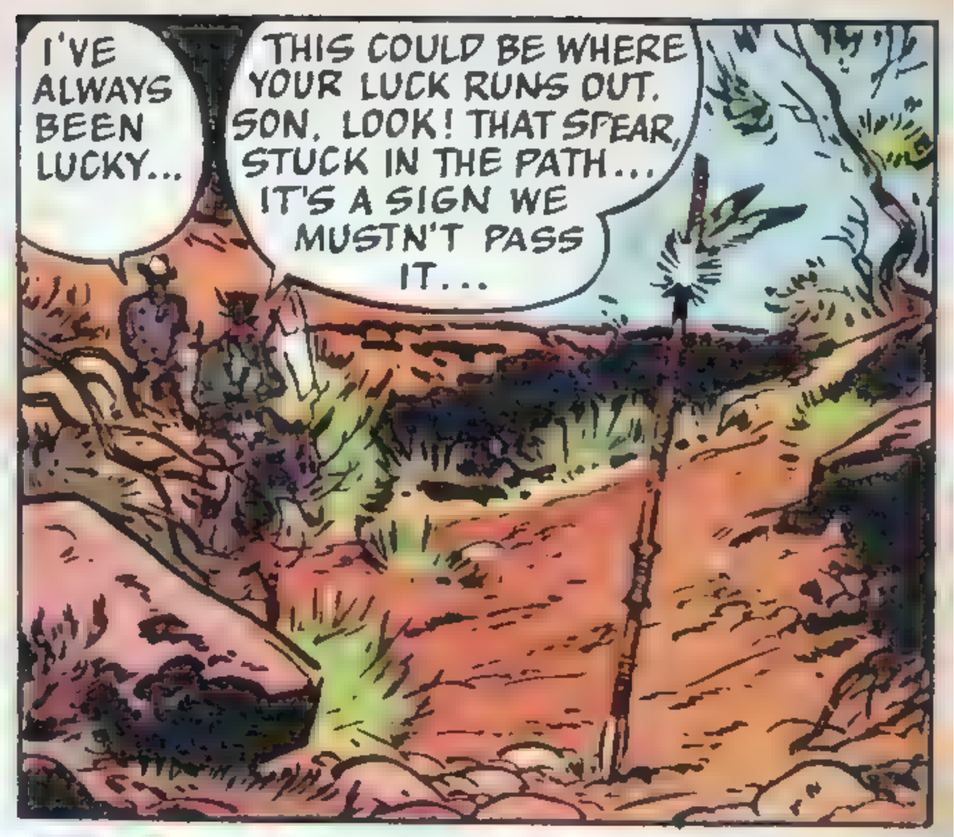
A BUGLE! THE BLUECOATS!
THEY HAVE CAPTURED CIELITO!
WE MUST HELP HIM!
THAT IS WHAT THE PALE-FACES WANT... WE WOULD FALL INTO THEIR TRAP! NO... IT IS TOO DANGER OUS!

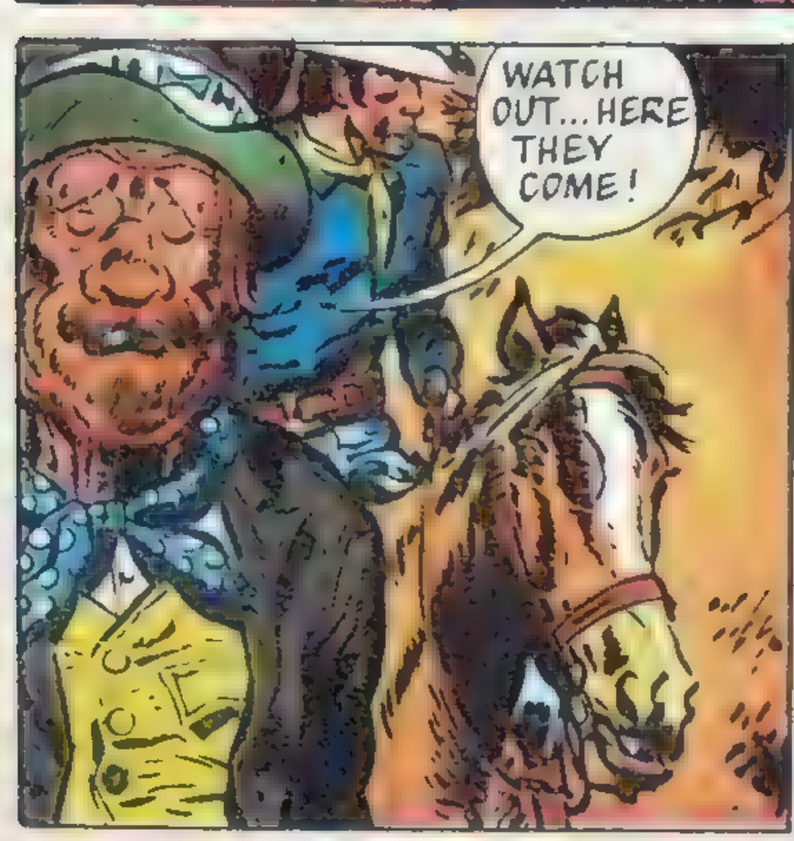
PHEW! I'M OFF! I GUESS THE APACHES WON'T TRY ANYTHING BEFORE DAYLIGHT NOW!

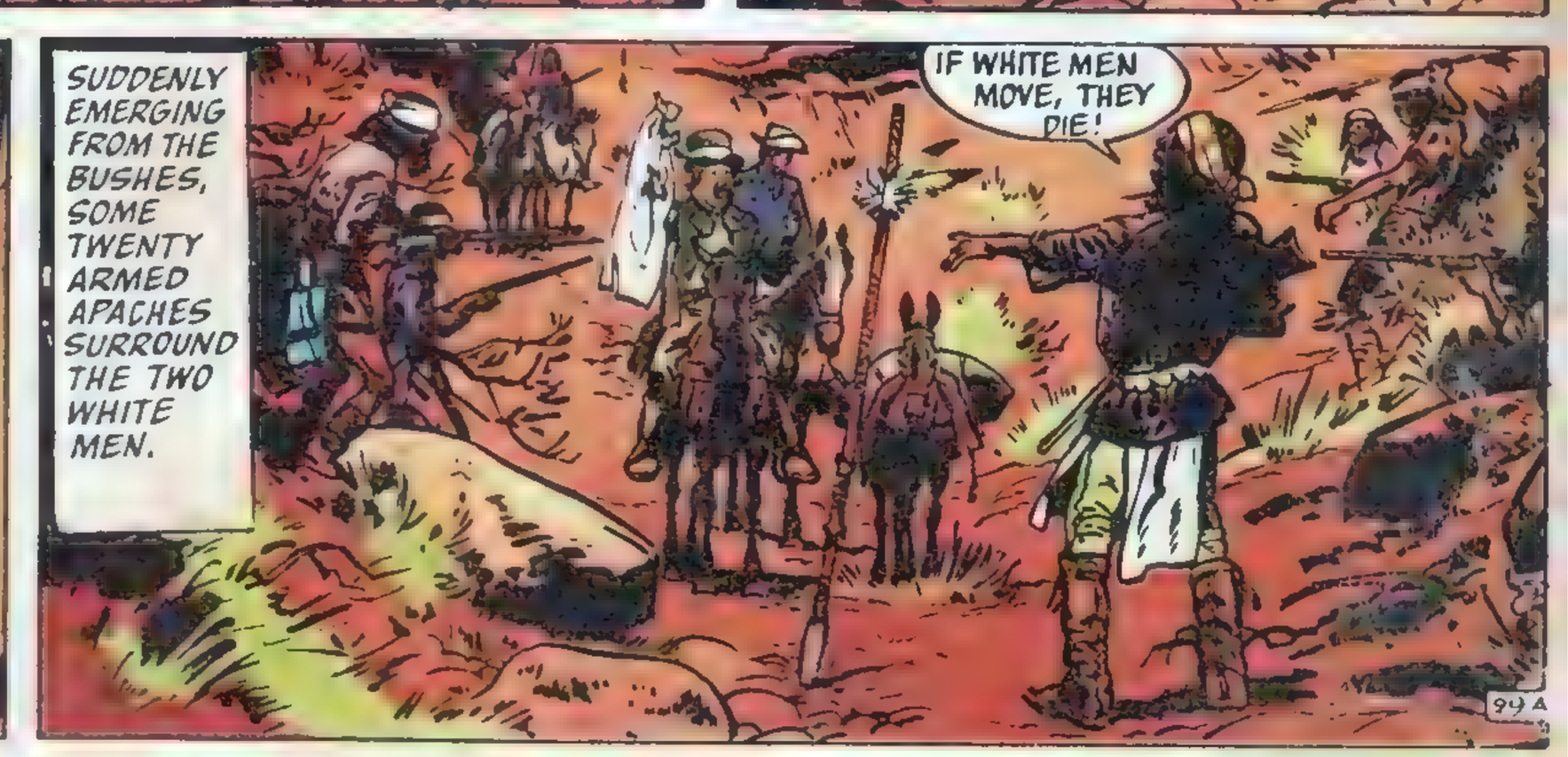

AT DAWN...
PLEASED TO SEE YOU SON! I WAS GETTING REAL SCARED! DEAD MAN'S SPRING AIN'T ABOVE TWO HOURS' RIDE AWAY.
WE'LL GET THERE FIRST!


JUST WHAT ARE YOU UP TO, JIM?
WHITE FLAG, SON! CHARRIBA'S CAMP CAN'T BE FAR OFF... HIS SCOUTS HAVE BEEN TRAILING US FOR TEN MINUTES NOW.

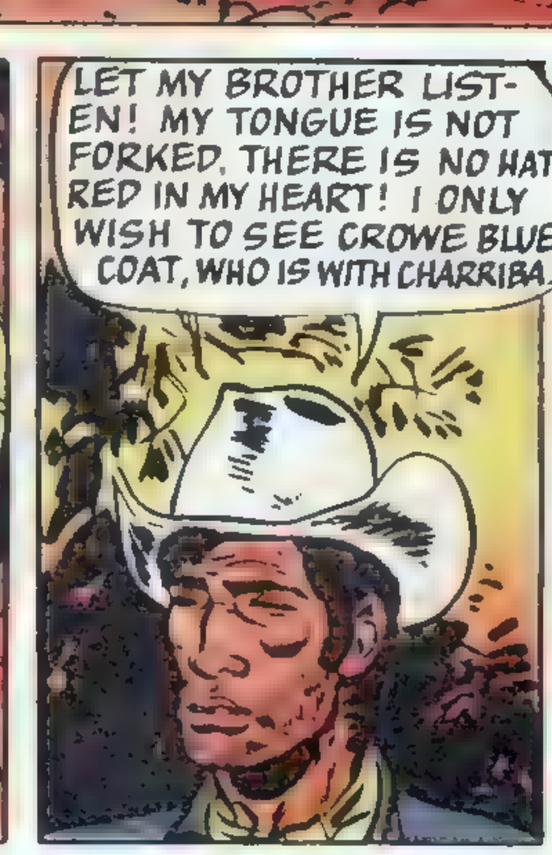

THE TWO RIDERS GO ON...
AIN'T NO USE CRICKING YOUR NECK, SON! TIME YOU SEE THE APACHES, IT'S TOO LATE! HO! HO! HO! DICING WITH DEATH, EH? GIVE US TEN MINUTES, EITHER OUR WHITE FLAG'LL HAVE DONE ITS WORK, OR WE'LL BE DEAD!


I'VE ALWAYS BEEN LUCKY...
THIS COULD BE WHERE YOUR LUCK RUNS OUT, SON. LOOK! THAT SPEAR, STUCK IN THE PATH... IT'S A SIGN WE MUSTN'T PASS IT...


WATCH OUT... HERE THEY COME!

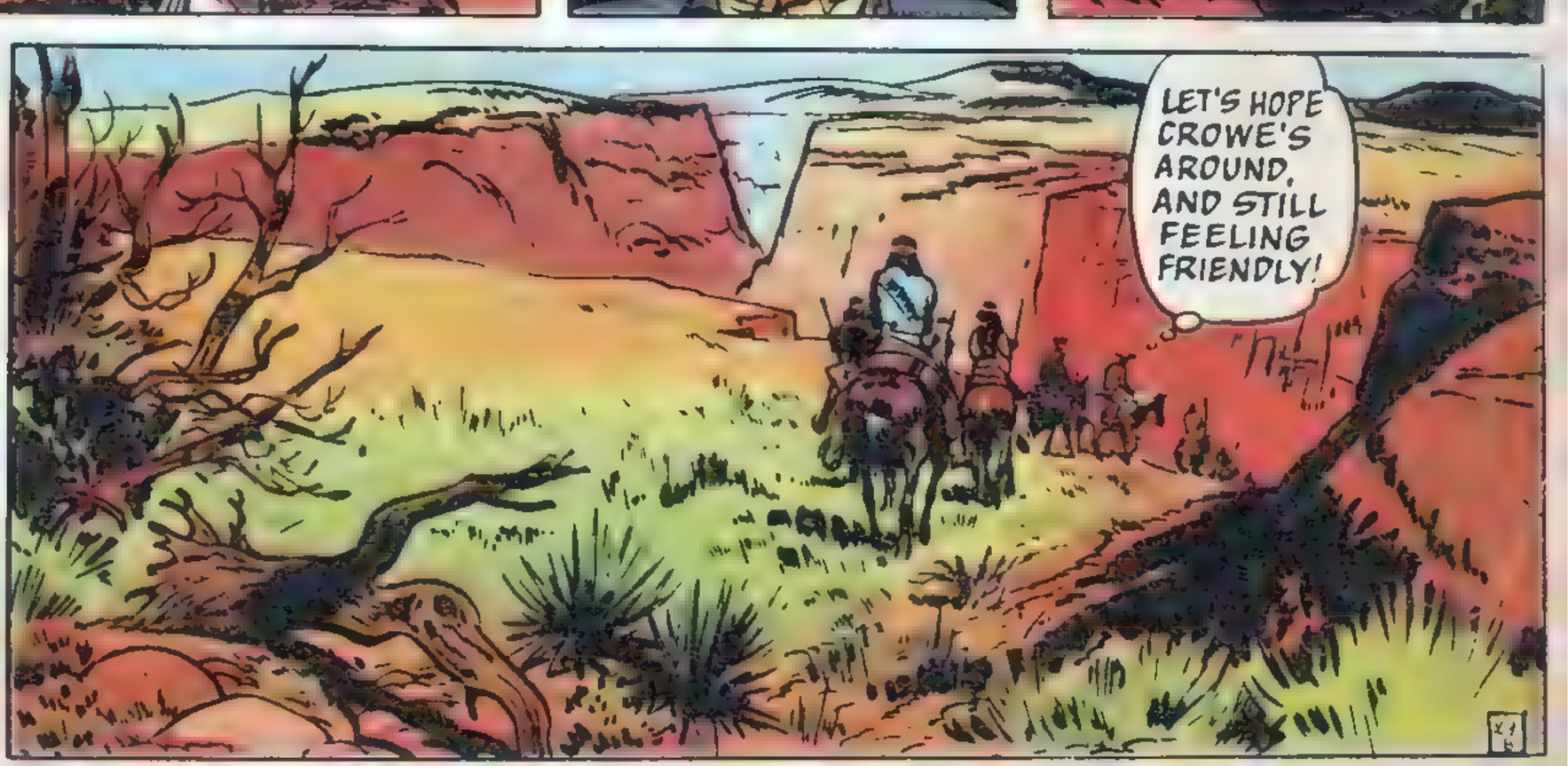

SUDDENLY EMERGING FROM THE BUSHES, SOME TWENTY ARMED APACHES SURROUND THE TWO WHITE MEN.
IF WHITE MEN MOVE, THEY DIE!

PALEFACES ARE CRAZY TO COME SO FAR! THEY WILL PAY FOR IT AT THE STAKE...
THINGS DON'T LOOK SO GOOD...


LET MY BROTHER LISTEN! MY TONGUE IS NOT FORKED. THERE IS NO HATRED IN MY HEART! I ONLY WISH TO SEE CROWE BLUECOAT, WHO IS WITH CHARRIBA.

CROWE BLUECOAT IS MY BLOOD-BROTHER! TAKE ME TO HIM! HE WILL TELL YOU I AM A FRIEND OF THE APACHES!

UGH! IF THE PALEFACE IS LYING, HE WILL SUFFER FOR IT! I WILL TAKE YOU TO CHARRIBA. HE WILL DECIDE.


LET'S HOPE CROWE'S AROUND, AND STILL FEELING FRIENDLY!

A SURPRISE AWAITS THE PALEFACE...

CHIEF CHARRIBA EXPECTING PALEFACES!

WHY HAVE MY BRAVES BROUGHT THESE RATS HERE, INSTEAD OF KILLING THEM ON THE SPOT? WE DO NOT SPEAK WITH WHITE MEN!

I COME OF MY OWN FREE WILL, CHARRIBA! I HOPE TO MEET MY BLOOD-BROTHER, CROWE BLUE-COAT, IN YOUR CAMP!

YOU LIE!

SEND FOR CROWE! HE WILL TELL YOU I AM A FRIEND OF THE APACHES. I HAVE COME TO TRY AND MAKE PEACE BETWEEN INDIANS AND PALE-FACES.

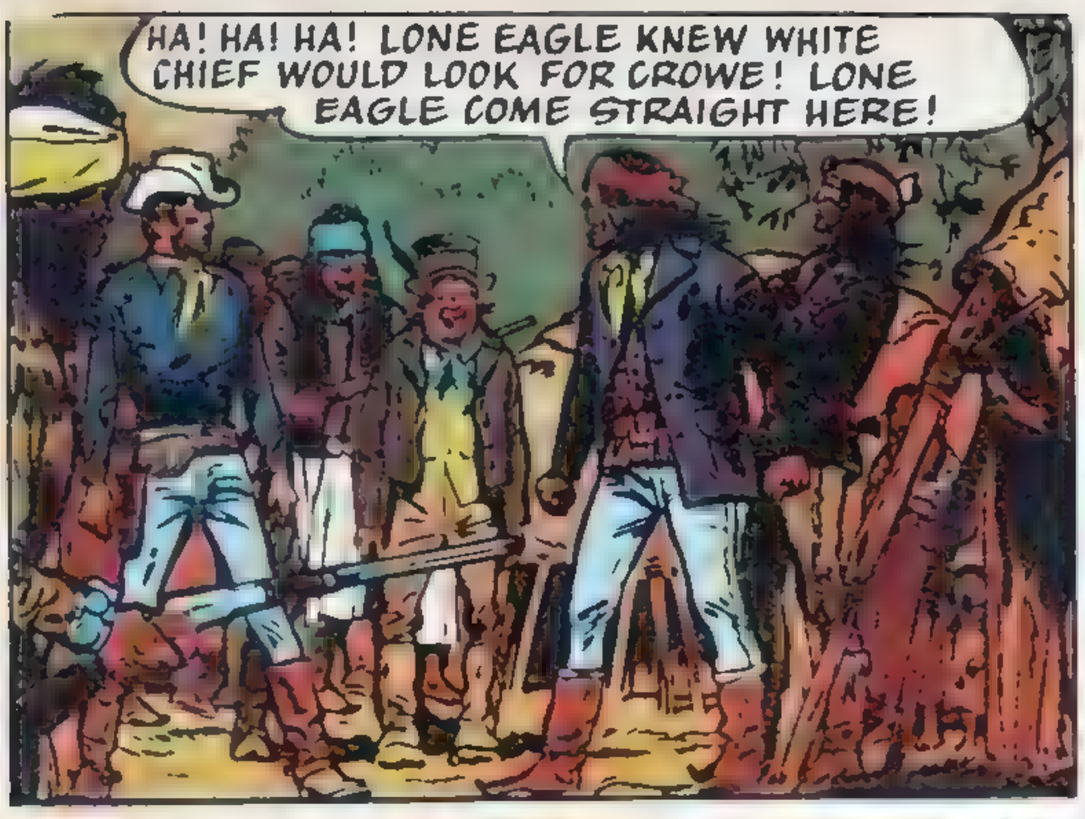
THERE WILL NEVER BE PEACE BETWEEN US! SOON COCHISE WILL CROSS BACK OVER THE FRONTIER AND DRIVE THE WHITE MEN AWAY. BUT YOU WILL NOT SEE THAT DAY!

I HAVE MESSAGES FOR COCHISE, FROM THE GREAT WHITE CHIEF IN WASHINGTON. COCHISE ALONE CAN DECIDE. HE IS WISE...HE WILL LISTEN! BUT CROWE MUST GUIDE ME TO HIM...WHERE IS CROWE?

I DO NOT KNOW... BUT ONE MAN HERE KNOWS YOU!

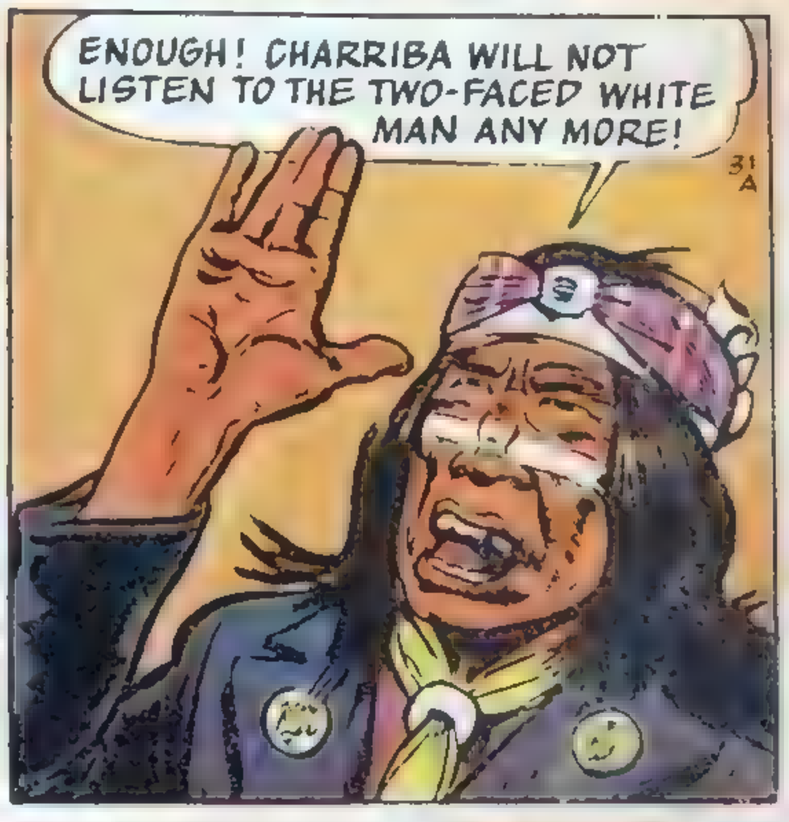
QU... QUANAH ONE-EYE! HELL!

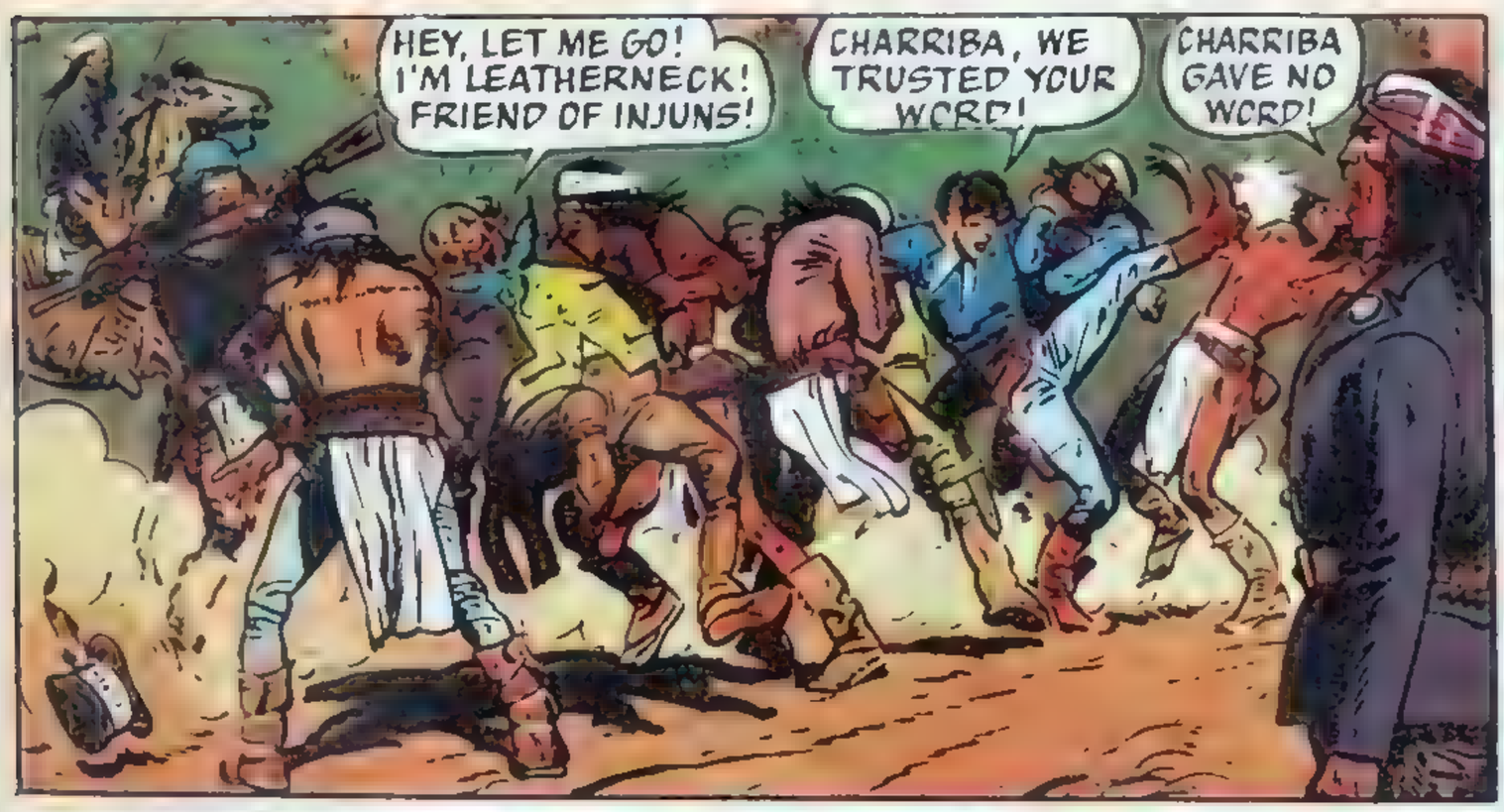
HA! HA! HA! PALEFACE RECOGNIZE LONE EAGLE, EH? HA, HA, HA! CHARRIBA! THIS MAN IS BIG CHIEF OF BLUE-COATS! HIM WANT SEE COCHISE TO KILL HIM!!


HA! HA! HA! LONE EAGLE KNEW WHITE CHIEF WOULD LOOK FOR CROWE! LONE EAGLE COME STRAIGHT HERE!

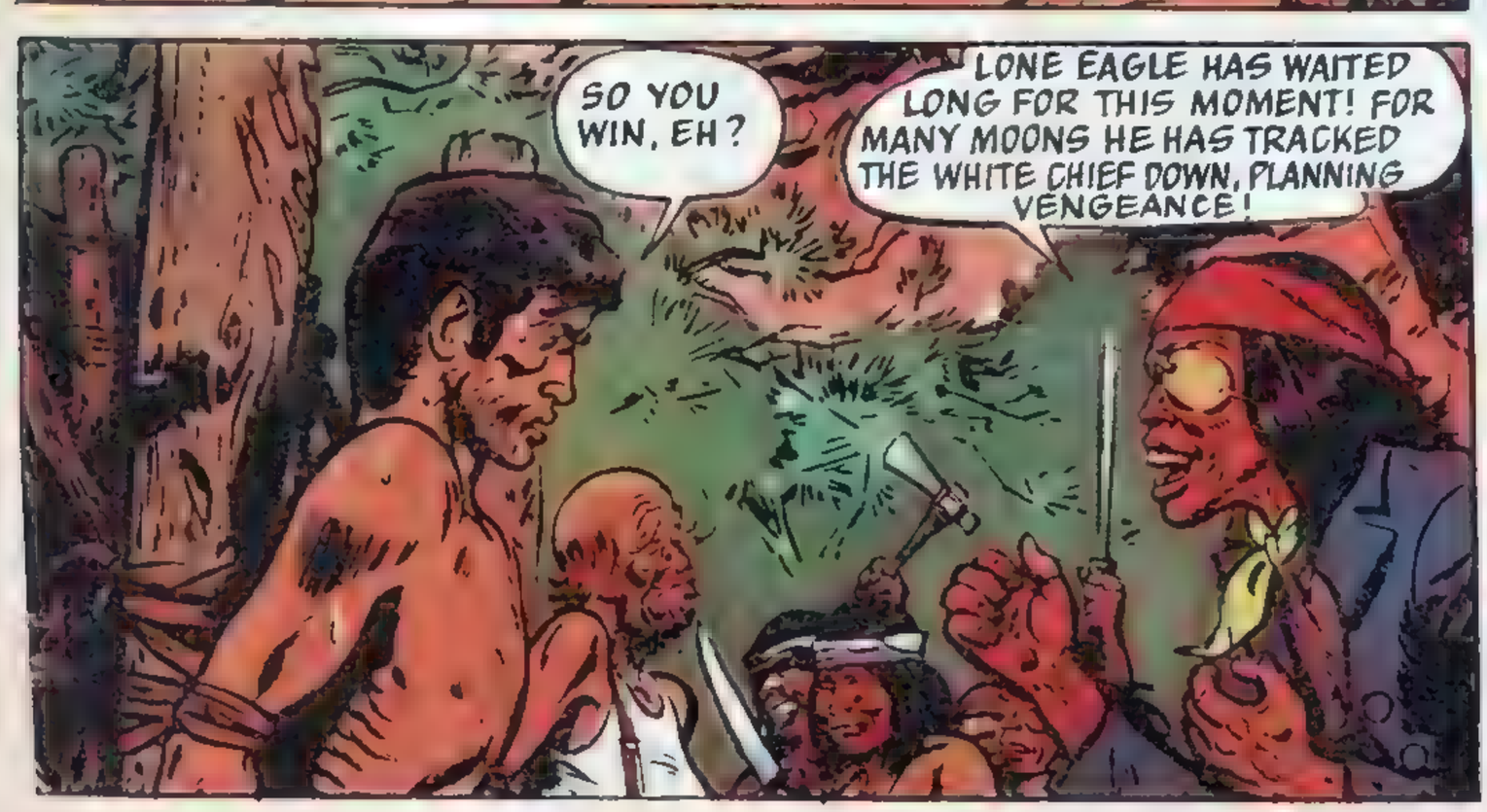
CHARRIBA, DON'T LISTEN TO THIS MAN! FIRST HE BETRAYED HIS RED BROTHERS, ACTING AS A SCOUT, QUANAH; THEN HE BETRAYED US, TOO. HE IS LYING! WE WANT PEACE!
LET CHARRIBA'S BRAVES SEARCH THE PALEFACE'S SADDLEBAGS. THEY WILL SEE HIS TONGUE IS FORKED!

A BLUE-COAT TUNIC!
THIS IS YOUR PROOF! HE HID HIS BLUE COAT TO DECEIVE THE RED MEN!
THAT'S NOT TRUE! WHERE'S CROWE? HE'LL SPEAK FOR ME!


ENOUGH! CHARRIBA WILL NOT LISTEN TO THE TWO-FACED WHITE MAN ANY MORE!


HEY, LET ME GO! I'M LEATHERNECK! FRIEND OF INJUNS!
CHARRIBA, WE TRUSTED YOUR WORD!
CHARRIBA GAVE NO WORD!

SORRY, JIMMY! I FELL RIGHT INTO THEIR TRAP!
WE ALL HAVE TO DIE SOME DAY, SONNY!


SO YOU WIN, EH?
LONE EAGLE HAS WAITED LONG FOR THIS MOMENT! FOR MANY MOONS HE HAS TRACKED THE WHITE CHIEF DOWN, PLANNING VENGEANCE!

NOW LONE EAGLE WILL HAVE THE WHITE CHIEF'S SCALP, AS HE SWORE TO THE SOULS OF THE BRAVES THE PALEFACE KILLED!!!
IF YOU LET THIS WAR GO ON, OTHER BRAVES WILL DIE. YOU KNOW THE BLUECOATS WILL WIN IN THE END!

NOT THIS TIME, DOG! BROWNFACES* WAIT FOR COCHISE BEYOND THE GREAT RIVER.† THEY WILL GIVE HIM HORSES AND FOOD, AND ARMS FOR HIS WARRIORS! GUNS THAT SHOOT MANY TIMES, LIKE THE BLUE-COAT GUNS!

WHAT?

*MEXICANS †RIO GRANDE

THE MEXES! HELL... THEY'D BE ONLY TOO GLAD TO USE THE INJUNS AGAINST US...AND THEN, WITH THE WAY CLEAR, THEY'D BE RIGHT BACK THERE IN TEXAS.

THAT IS WHY LONE EAGLE WILL NOT LET THE WHITE CHIEF SEE COCHISE! THE BLUECOAT'S TONGUE IS WILY; HE MIGHT CONVINCE COCHISE!

GO YOU GOT CROWE OUT OF THE WAY, DID YOU? IF HE WAS HERE, YOUR PLAN WOULDN'T COME OFF...CHARRIBA WOULD HAVE LISTENED TO HIM!

HA! HA! LONE EAGLE TELL CROWE YOU ARE COMING, CROWE GALLOP TO MEET YOU... THE WRONG WAY!

ENOUGH TALKING! LET THE TORTURE OF TWO-FACED BROKEN NOSE AND LEATHER-NECK BEGIN!

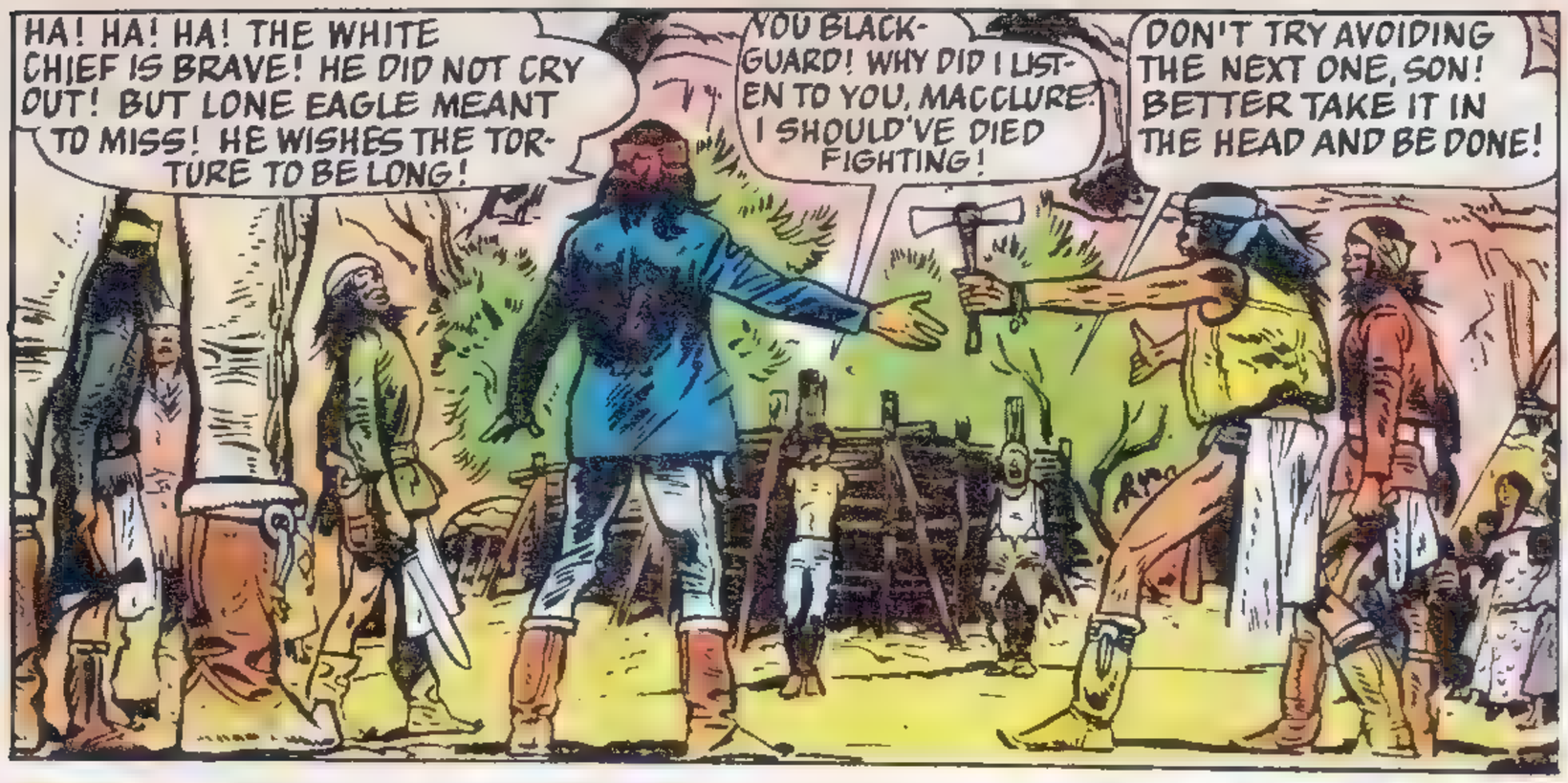
THE DULL, MONOTONOUS SOUND OF THE GREAT WAR DRUMS THUDS THROUGH THE CLEARING. WHILE THE SQUAWS SING A HOARSE, RHYTHMIC CHANT, THE WARRIORS LEAP AND DANCE AROUND THE PRISONERS, UTTERING STRIDENT CRIES.

YEAP! YEAP! YEAP!

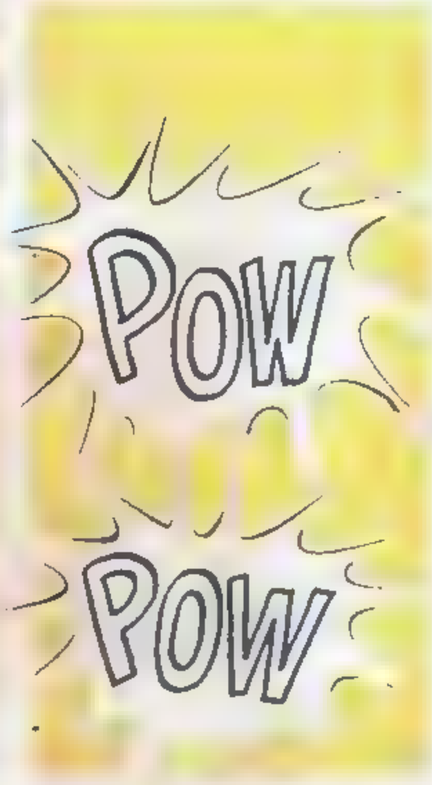
YEAP!

SUDDEN-LY...

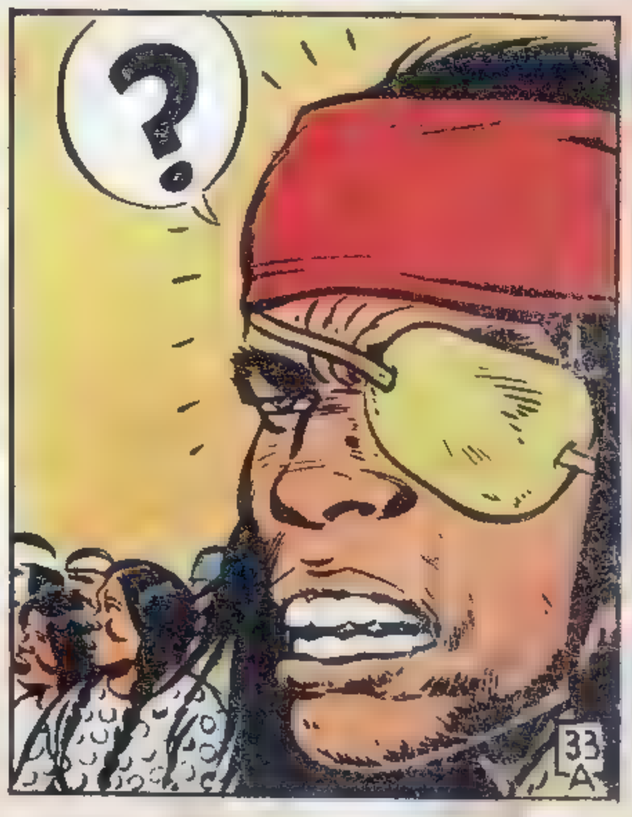
WHOOOP!


HA! HA! HA! THE WHITE CHIEF IS BRAVE! HE DID NOT CRY OUT! BUT LONE EAGLE MEANT TO MISS! HE WISHES THE TORTURE TO BE LONG!
YOU BLACKGUARD! WHY DID I LISTEN TO YOU, MACCLURE! I SHOULD'VE DIED FIGHTING!
DON'T TRY AVOIDING THE NEXT ONE, SON! BETTER TAKE IT IN THE HEAD AND BE DONE!

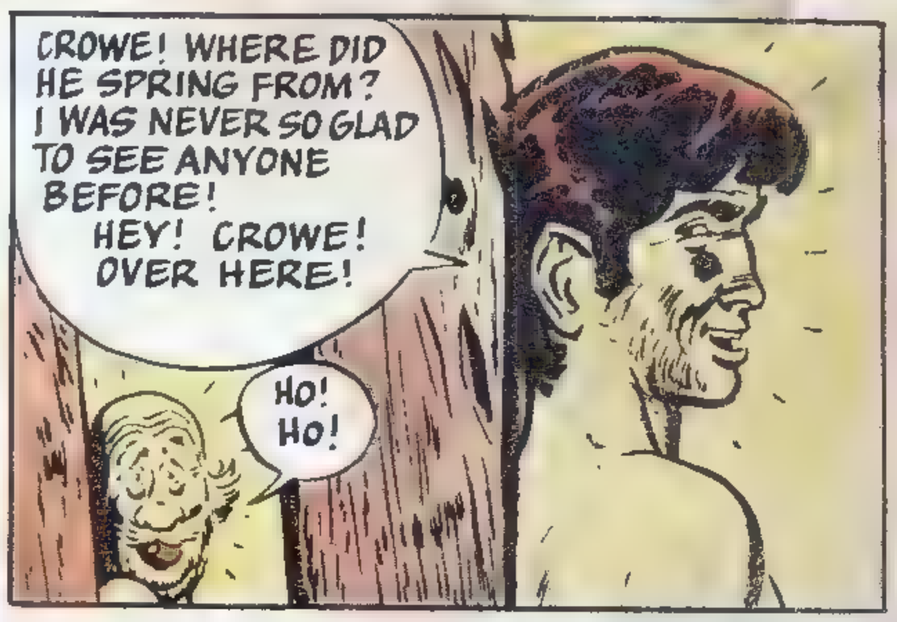
JIMMY'S RIGHT ... DAMN LONE EAGLE!

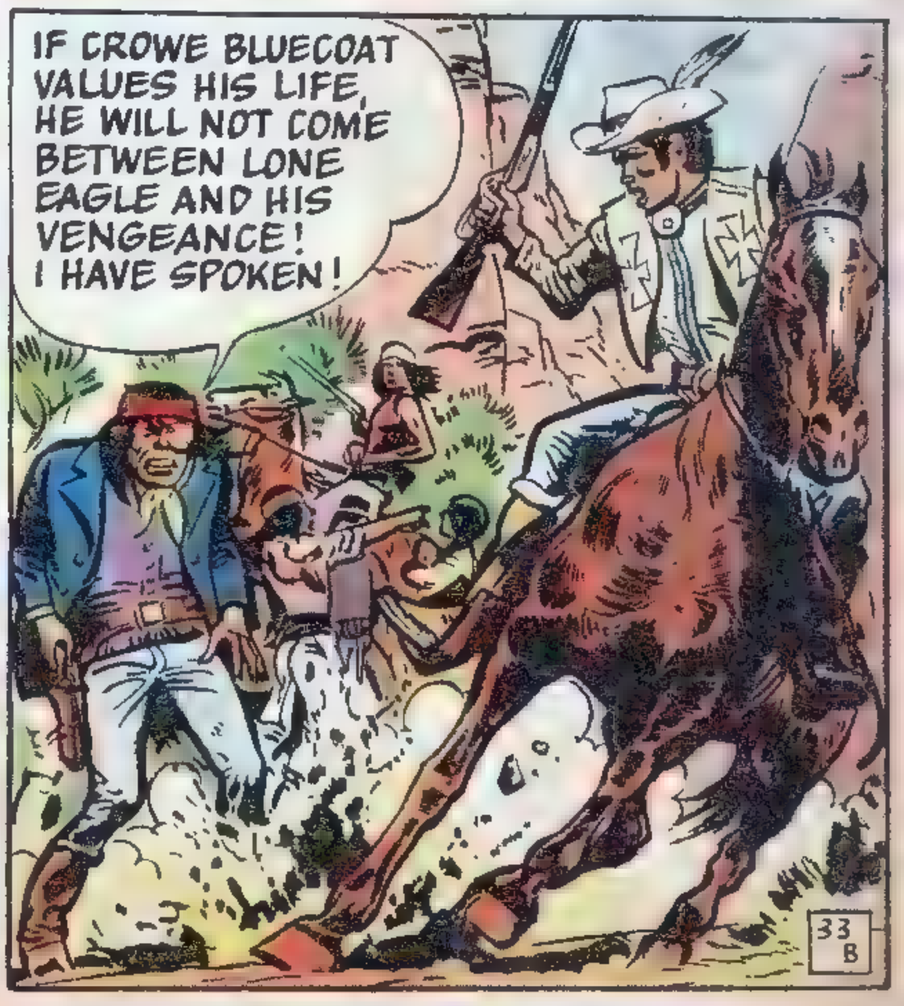

POW
POW

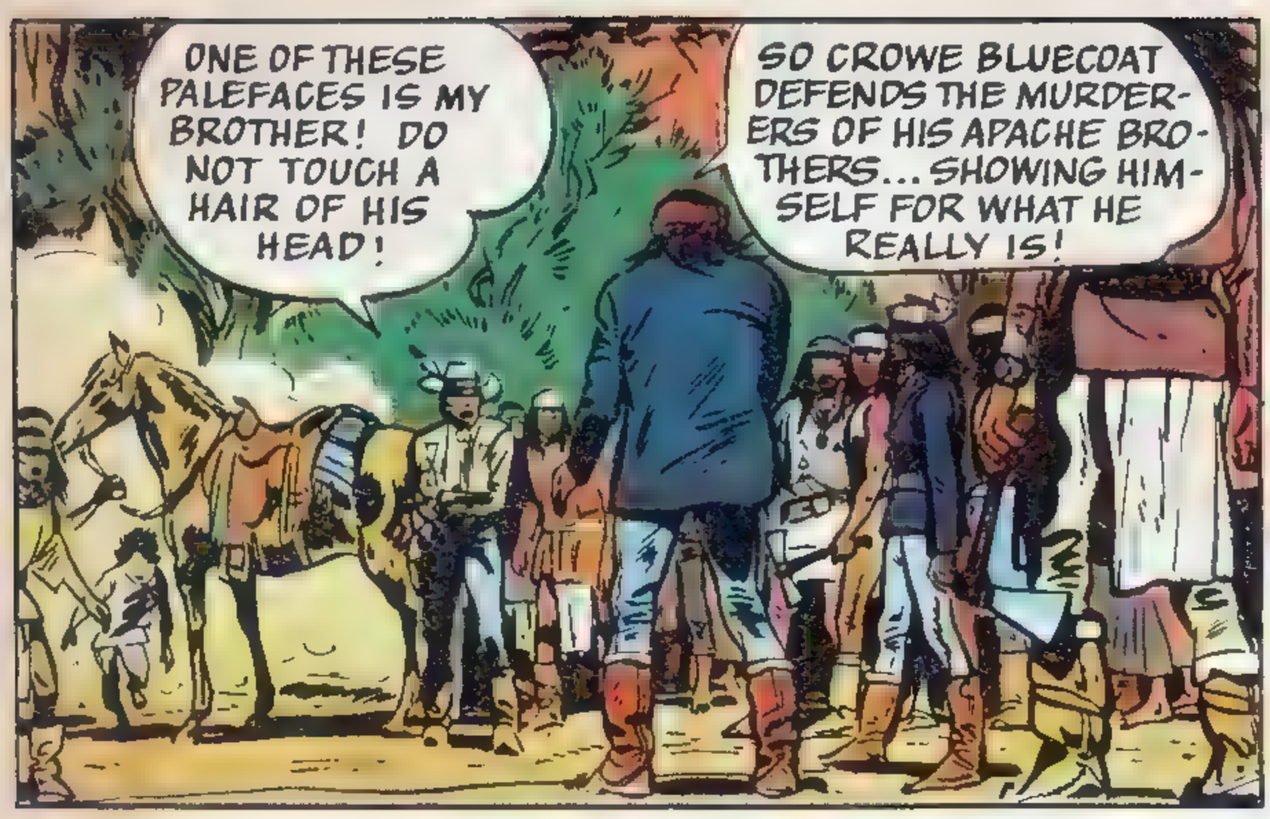
CRACK
CRACK


?
33 A

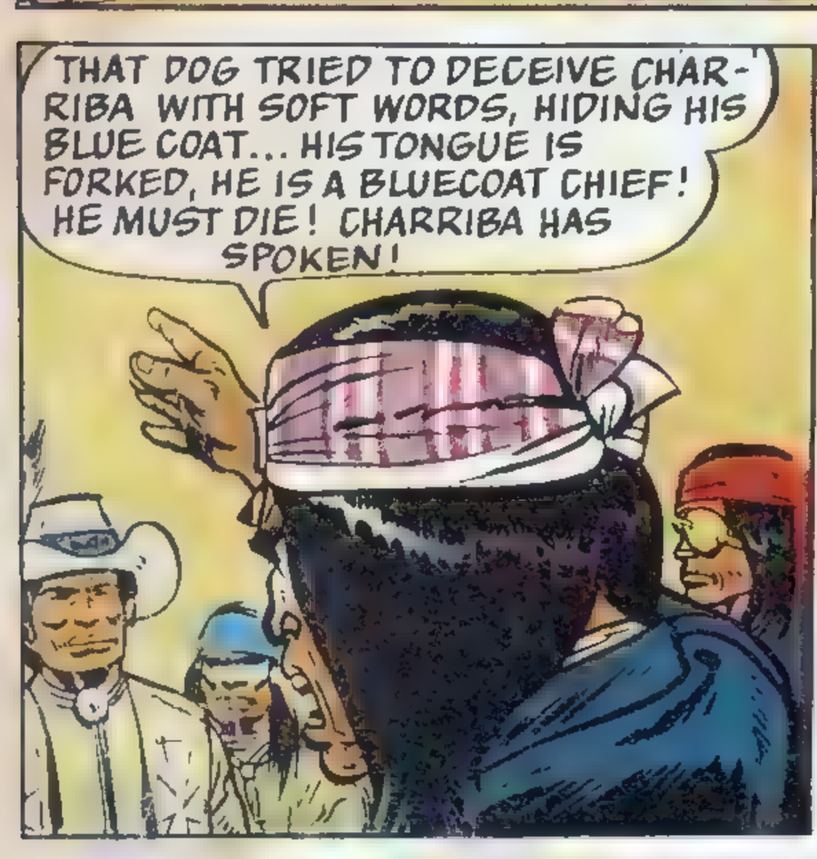
CROWE!
WHAT?

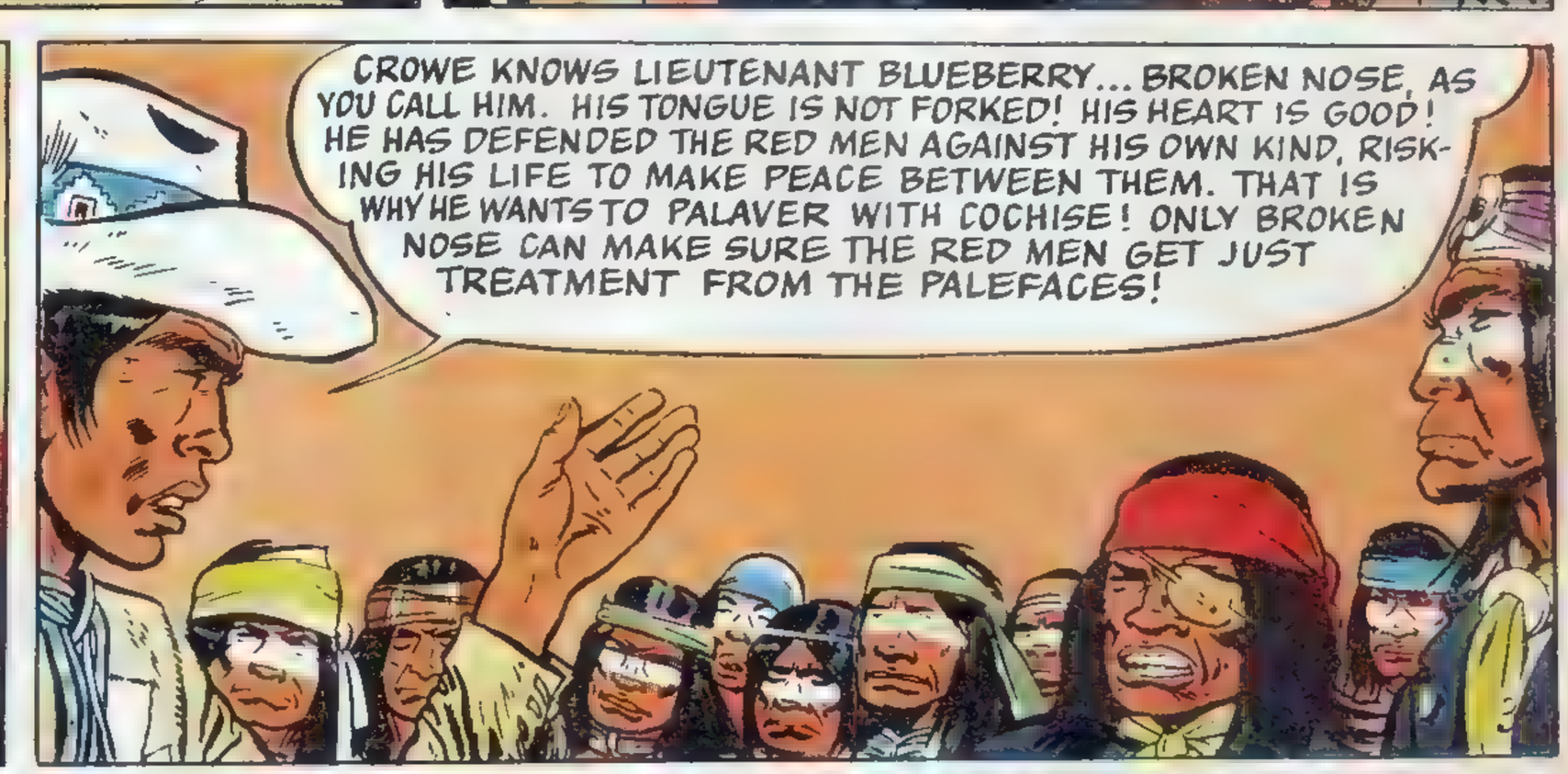

CROWE! WHERE DID HE SPRING FROM? I WAS NEVER SO GLAD TO SEE ANYONE BEFORE! HEY! CROWE! OVER HERE!
HO! HO!

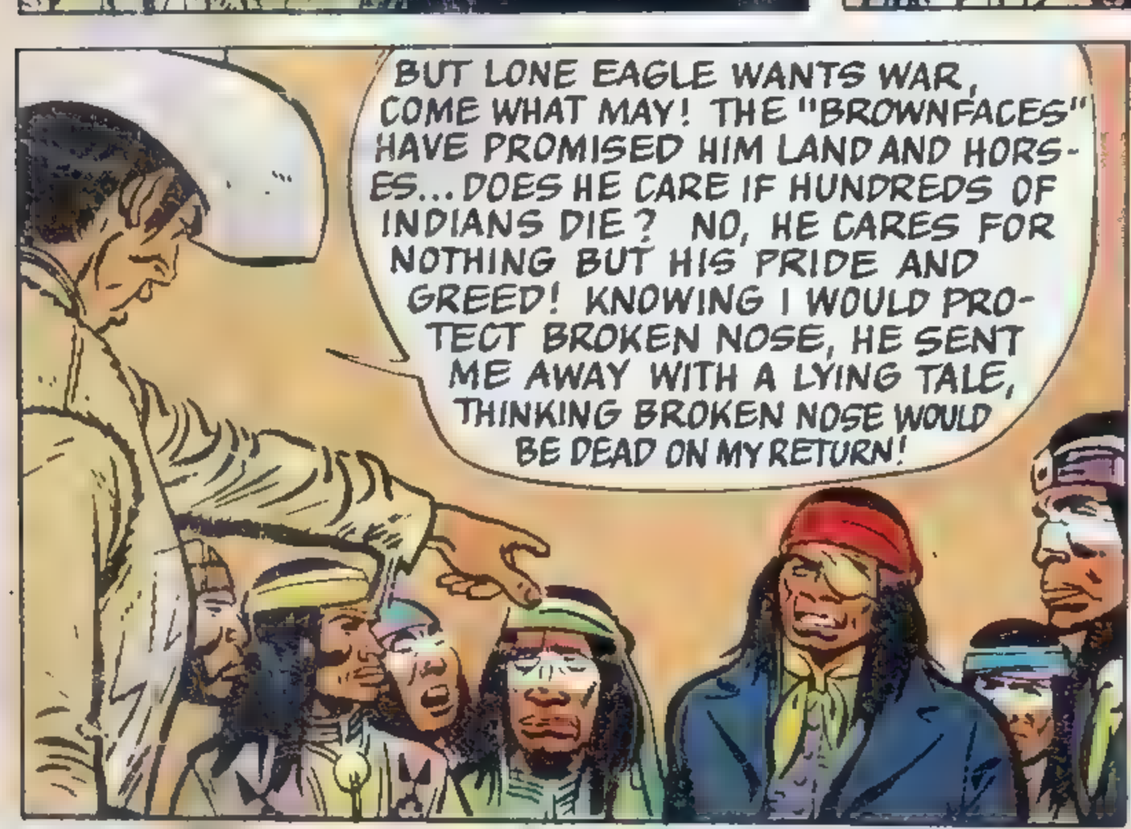

IF CROWE BLUECOAT VALUES HIS LIFE, HE WILL NOT COME BETWEEN LONE EAGLE AND HIS VENGEANCE! I HAVE SPOKEN!
33 B


ONE OF THESE PALEFACES IS MY BROTHER! DO NOT TOUCH A HAIR OF HIS HEAD!
SO CROWE BLUECOAT DEFENDS THE MURDERERS OF HIS APACHE BROTHERS... SHOWING HIMSELF FOR WHAT HE REALLY IS!

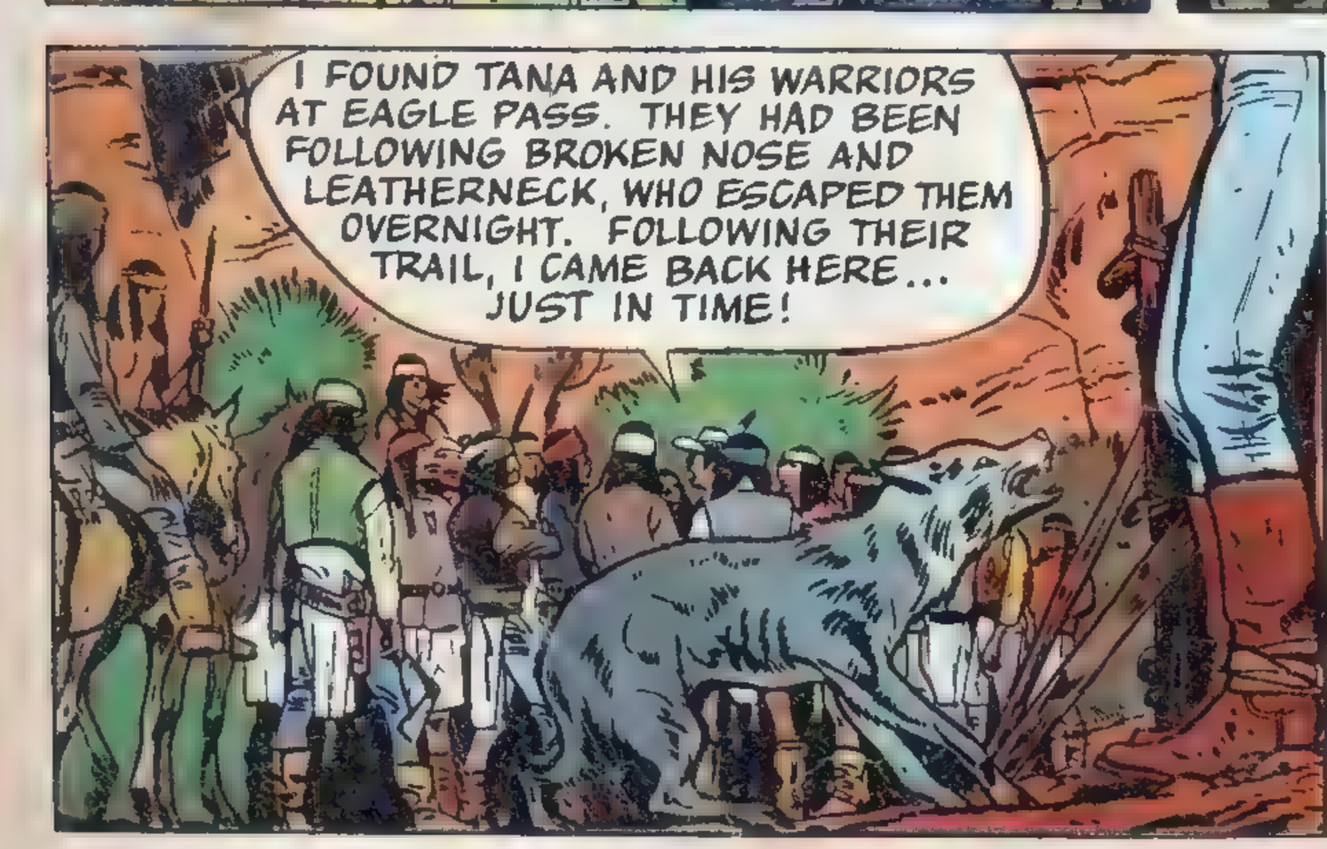
A TRAITOR TO HIS PEOPLE! A DOG WHO STILL SERVES HIS WHITE MASTERS!
STOP! ENOUGH BRAVES HAVE DIED ALREADY... LET MY BROTHERS NOT DO THE BLUECOATS' WORK FOR THEM!

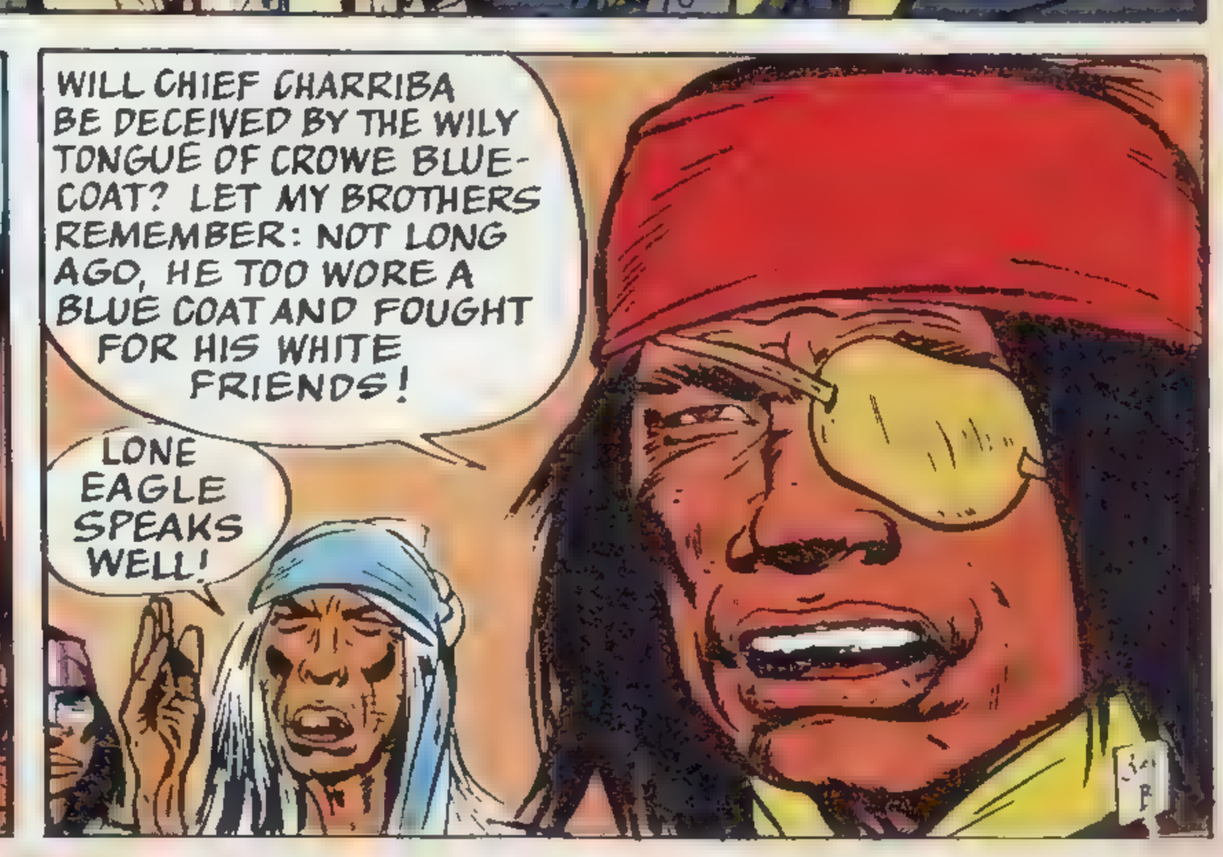

THAT DOG TRIED TO DECEIVE CHARRIBA WITH SOFT WORDS, HIDING HIS BLUE COAT... HIS TONGUE IS FORKED, HE IS A BLUECOAT CHIEF! HE MUST DIE! CHARRIBA HAS SPOKEN!

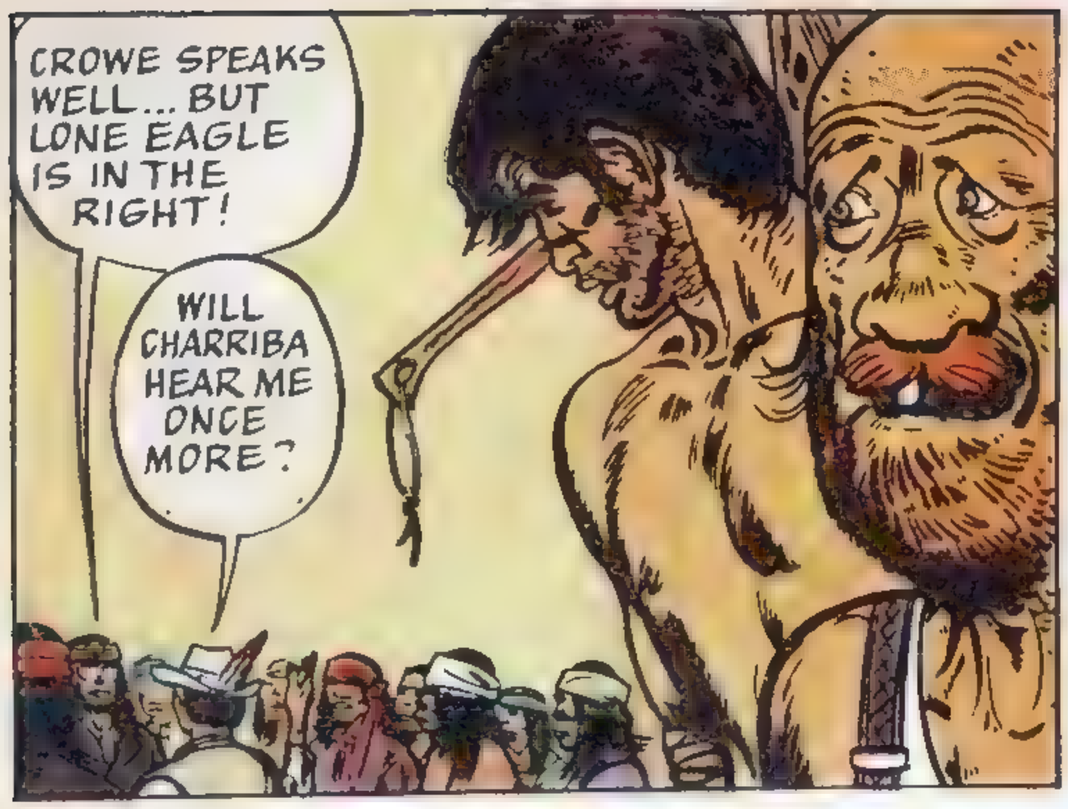

CROWE KNOWS LIEUTENANT BLUEBERRY... BROKEN NOSE, AS YOU CALL HIM. HIS TONGUE IS NOT FORKED! HIS HEART IS GOOD! HE HAS DEFENDED THE RED MEN AGAINST HIS OWN KIND, RISKING HIS LIFE TO MAKE PEACE BETWEEN THEM. THAT IS WHY HE WANTS TO PALAVER WITH COCHISE! ONLY BROKEN NOSE CAN MAKE SURE THE RED MEN GET JUST TREATMENT FROM THE PALEFACES!


BUT LONE EAGLE WANTS WAR, COME WHAT MAY! THE "BROWNFACES" HAVE PROMISED HIM LAND AND HORSES... DOES HE CARE IF HUNDREDS OF INDIANS DIE? NO, HE CARES FOR NOTHING BUT HIS PRIDE AND GREED! KNOWING I WOULD PROTECT BROKEN NOSE, HE SENT ME AWAY WITH A LYING TALE, THINKING BROKEN NOSE WOULD BE DEAD ON MY RETURN!

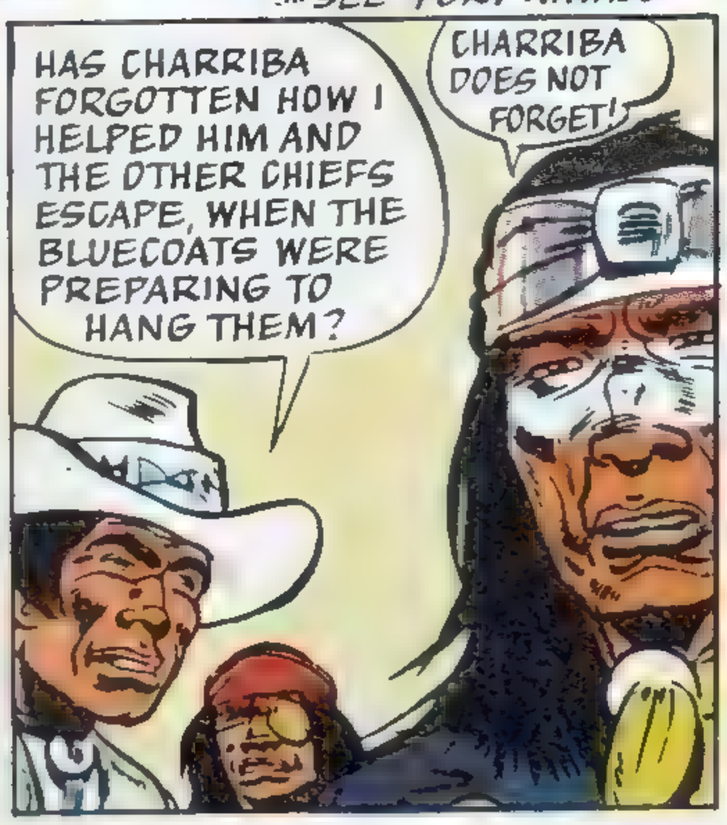
BUT YESTERDAY, GALLOPING THE WRONG WAY, I HEARD FIRING IN EAGLE PASS! I GUESSED IT ALL, AND TURNED BACK!

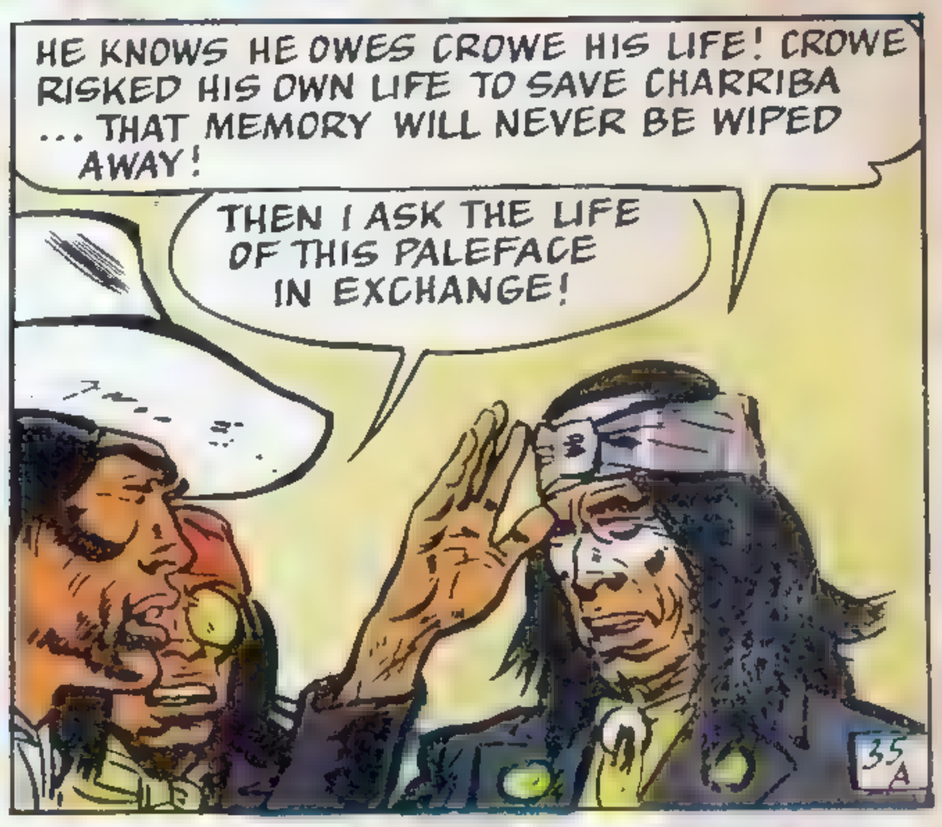

I FOUND TANA AND HIS WARRIORS AT EAGLE PASS. THEY HAD BEEN FOLLOWING BROKEN NOSE AND LEATHERNECK, WHO ESCAPED THEM OVERNIGHT. FOLLOWING THEIR TRAIL, I CAME BACK HERE... JUST IN TIME!

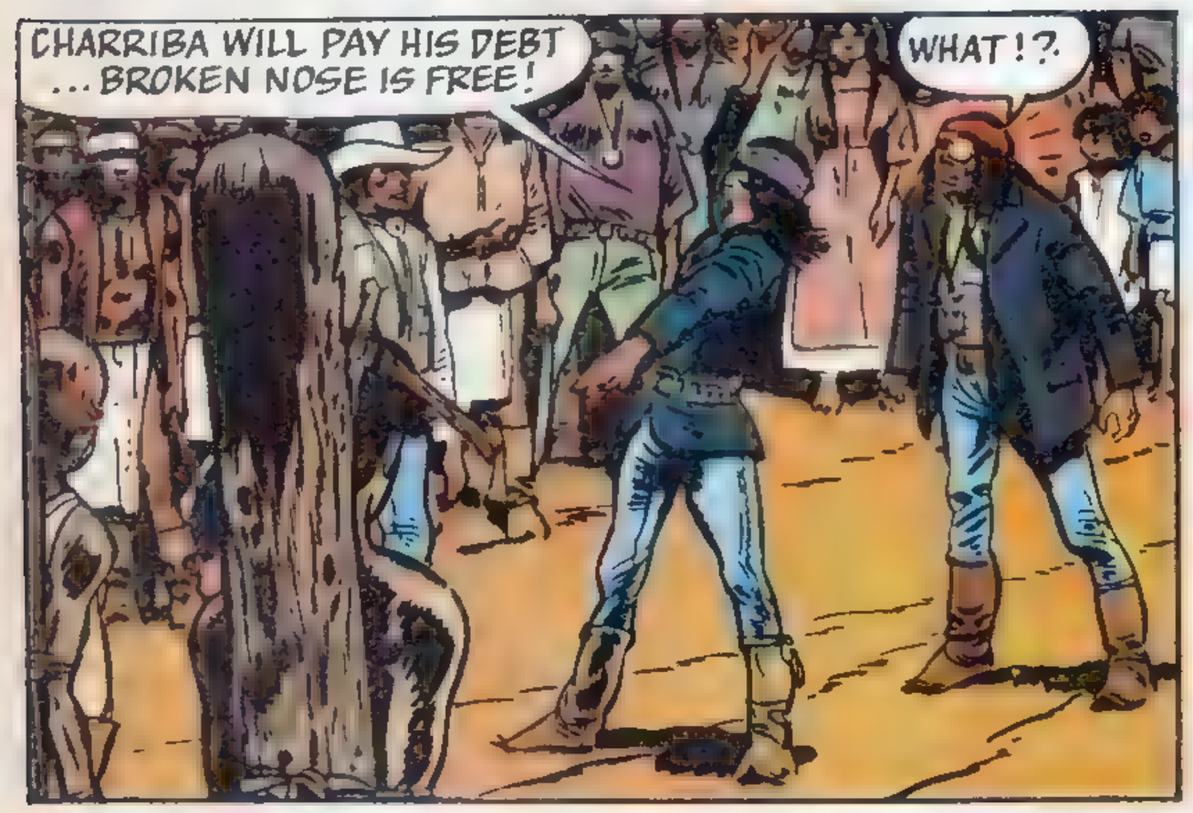

WILL CHIEF CHARRIBA BE DECEIVED BY THE WILY TONGUE OF CROWE BLUECOAT? LET MY BROTHERS REMEMBER: NOT LONG AGO, HE TOO WORE A BLUE COAT AND FOUGHT FOR HIS WHITE FRIENDS!
LONE EAGLE SPEAKS WELL!

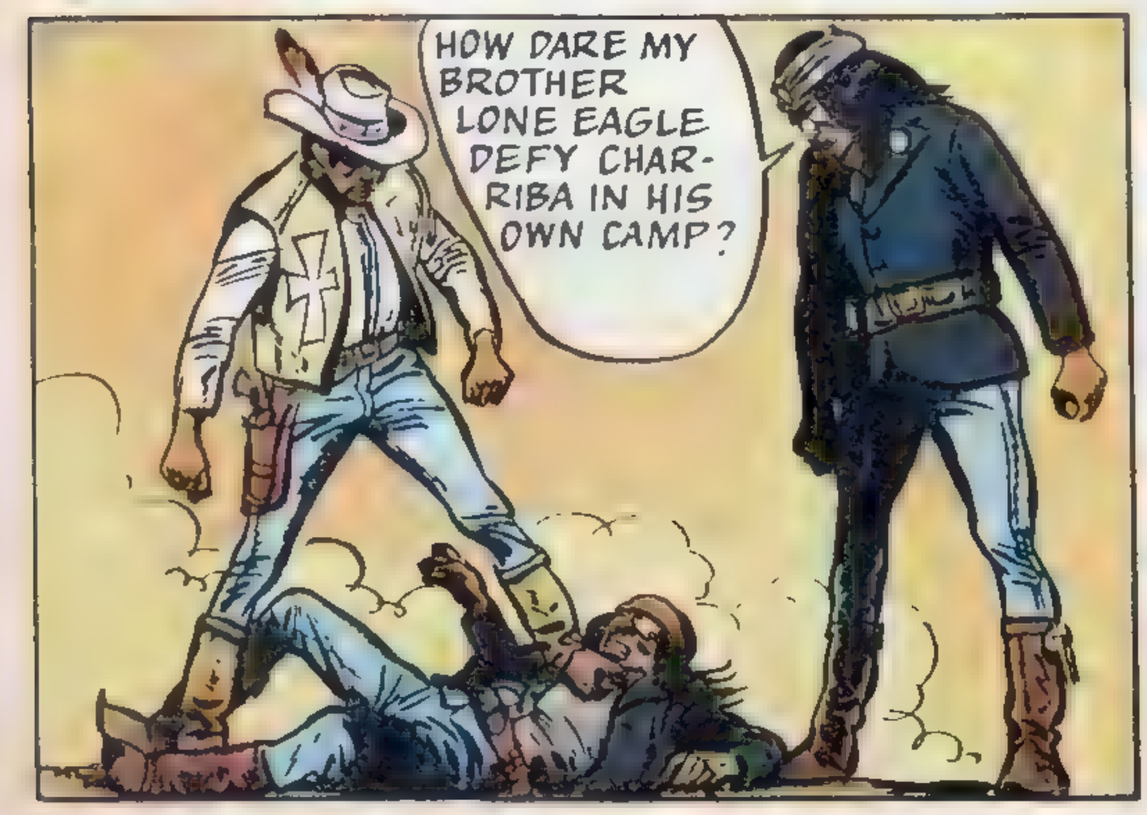


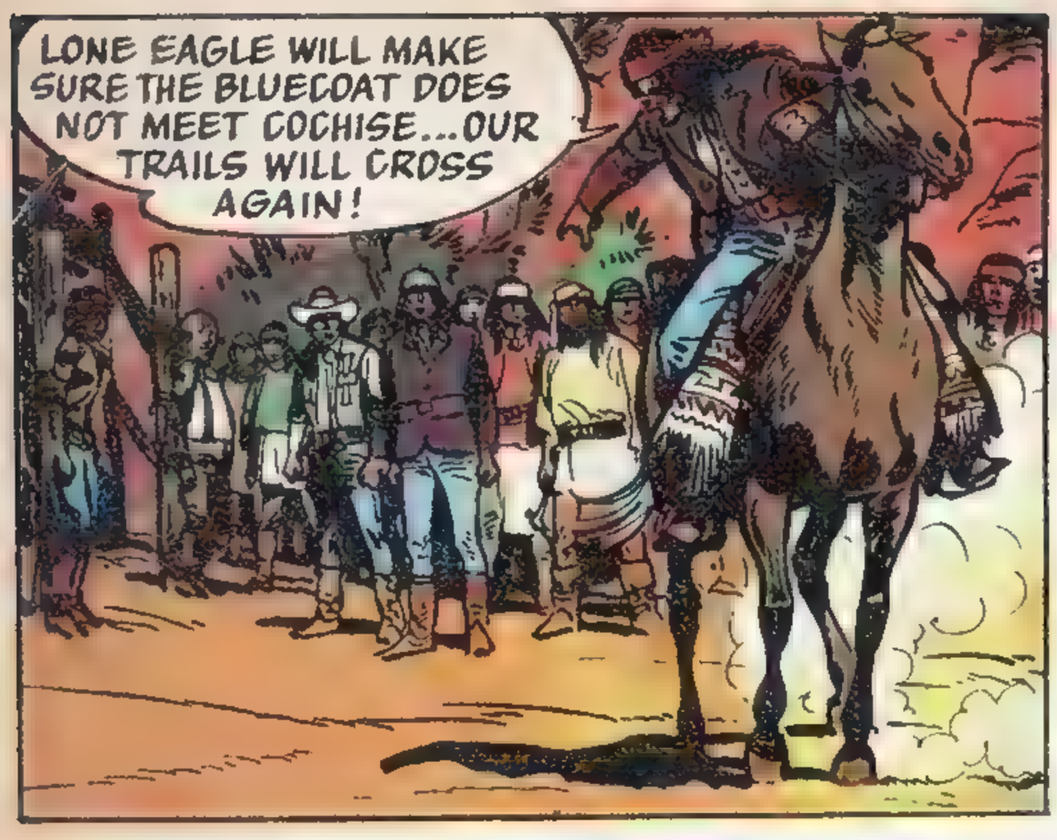
*SEE "FORT NAVAJO"

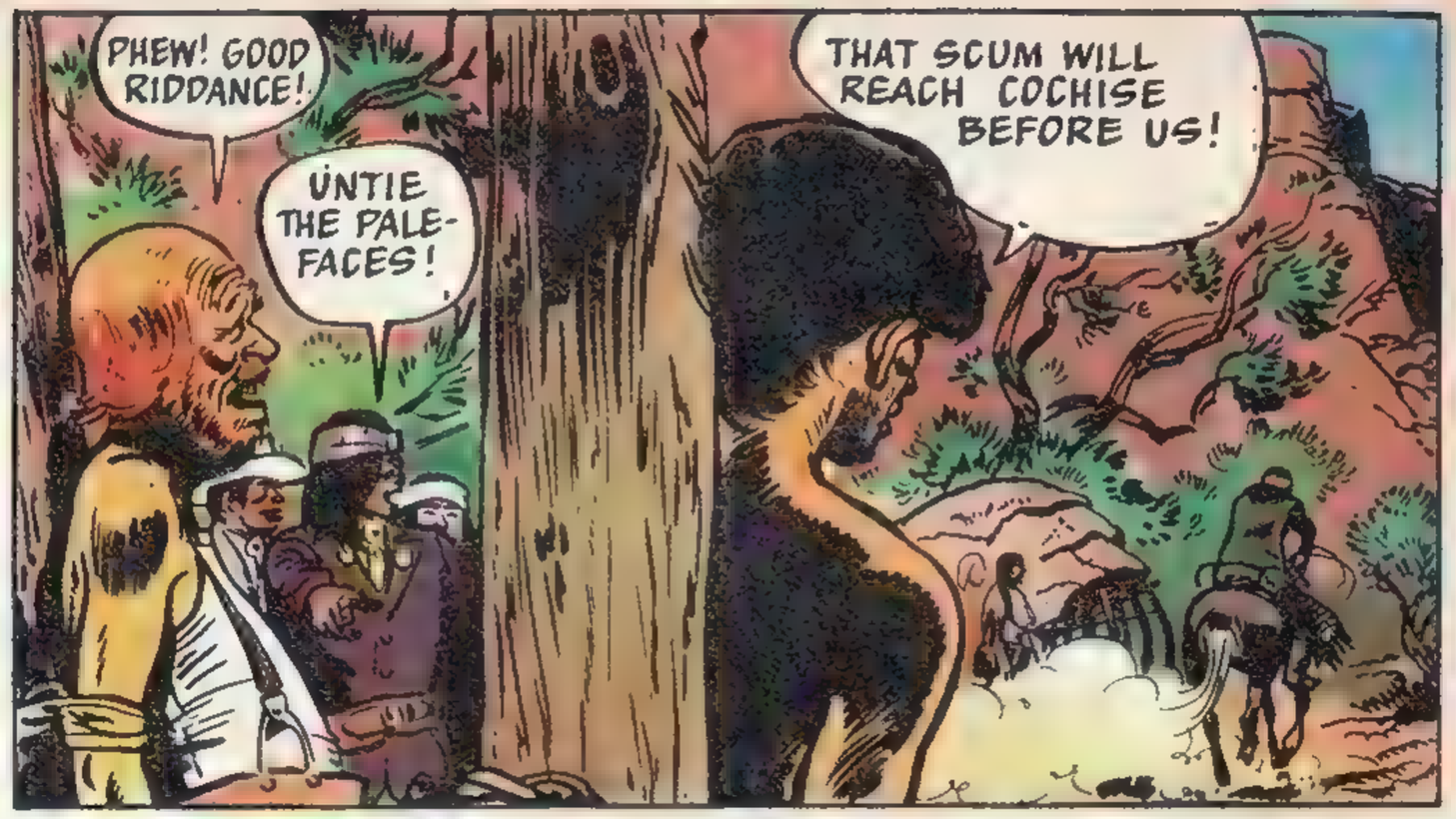




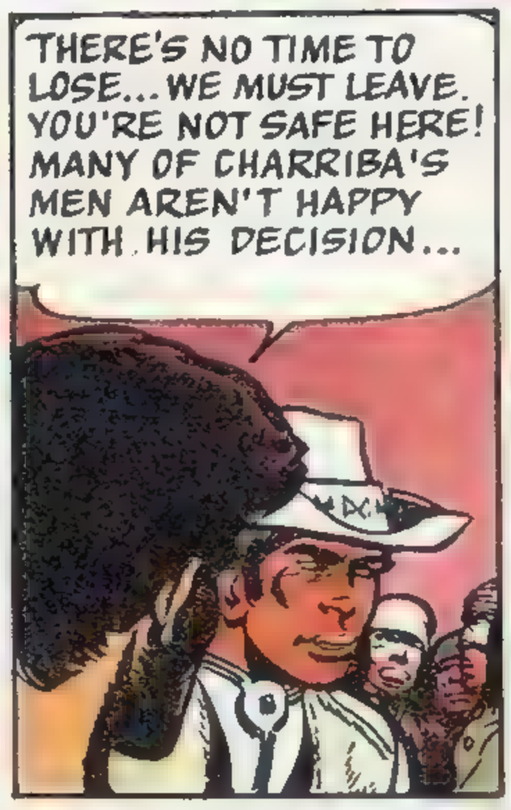


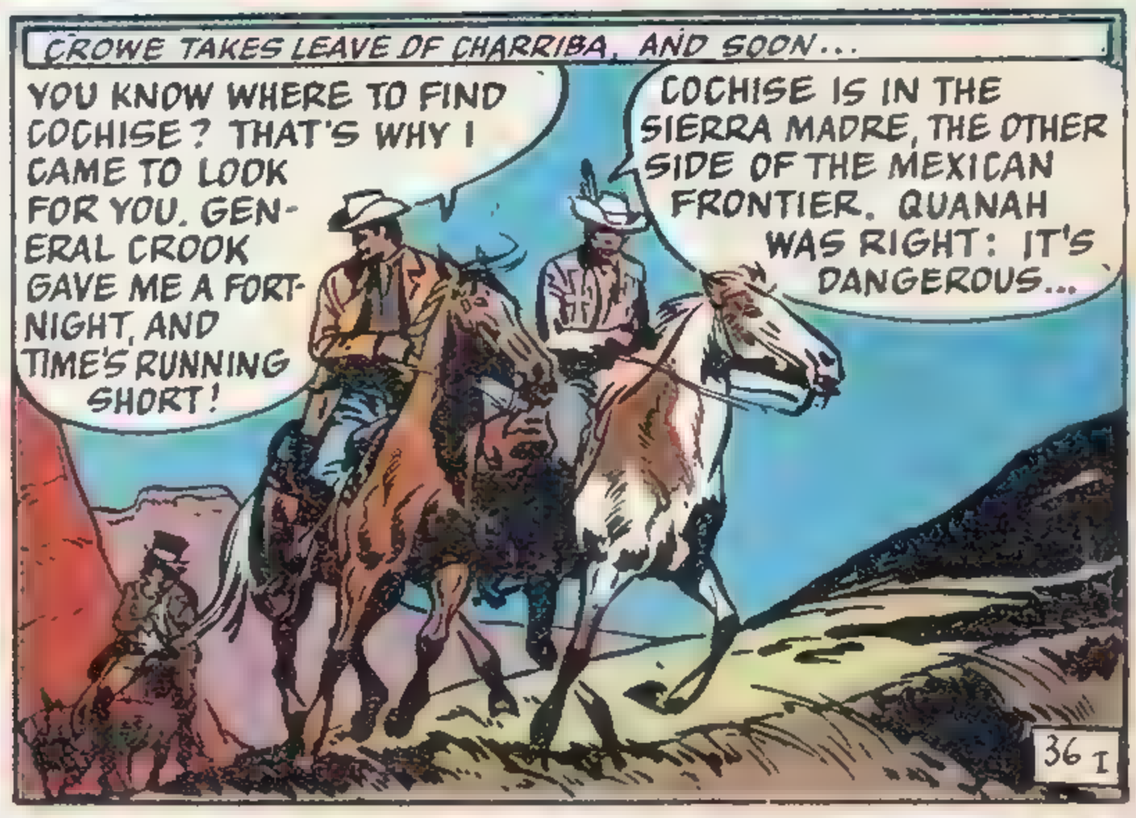



LONE EAGLE WILL MAKE SURE THE BLUECOAT DOES NOT MEET COCHISE...OUR TRAILS WILL CROSS AGAIN!

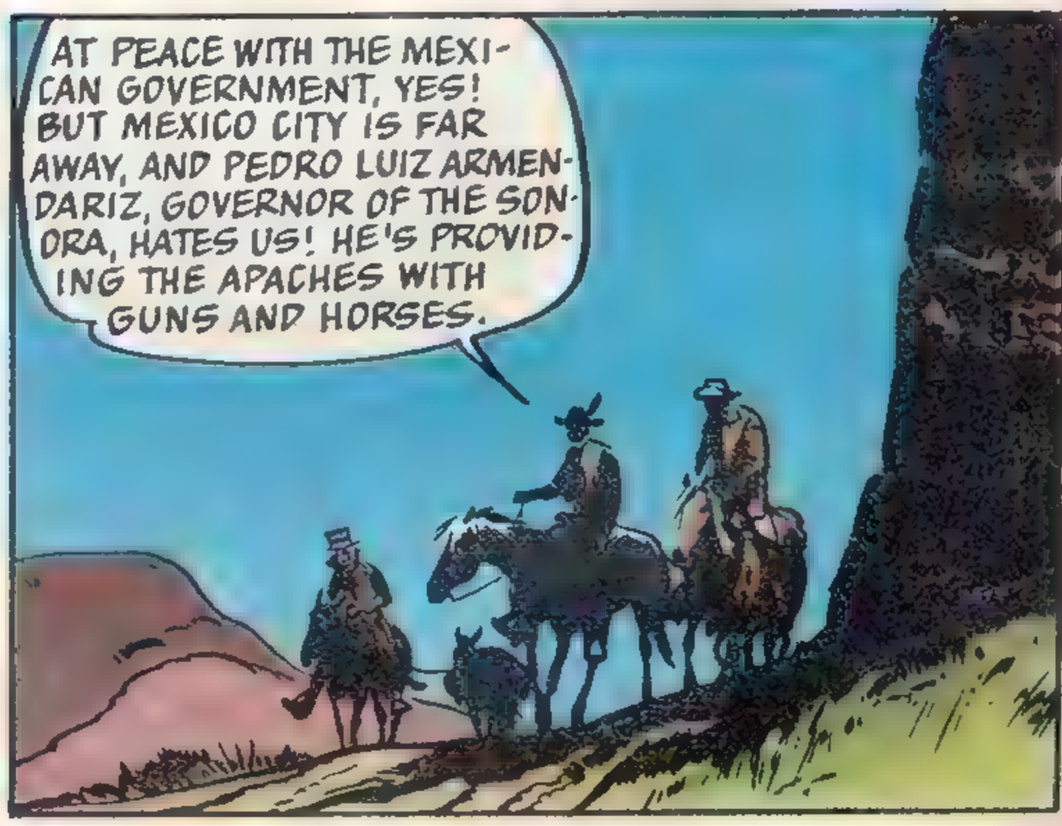

PHEW! GOOD RIDDANCE!
UNTIE THE PALE-FACES!
THAT SCUM WILL REACH COCHISE BEFORE US!

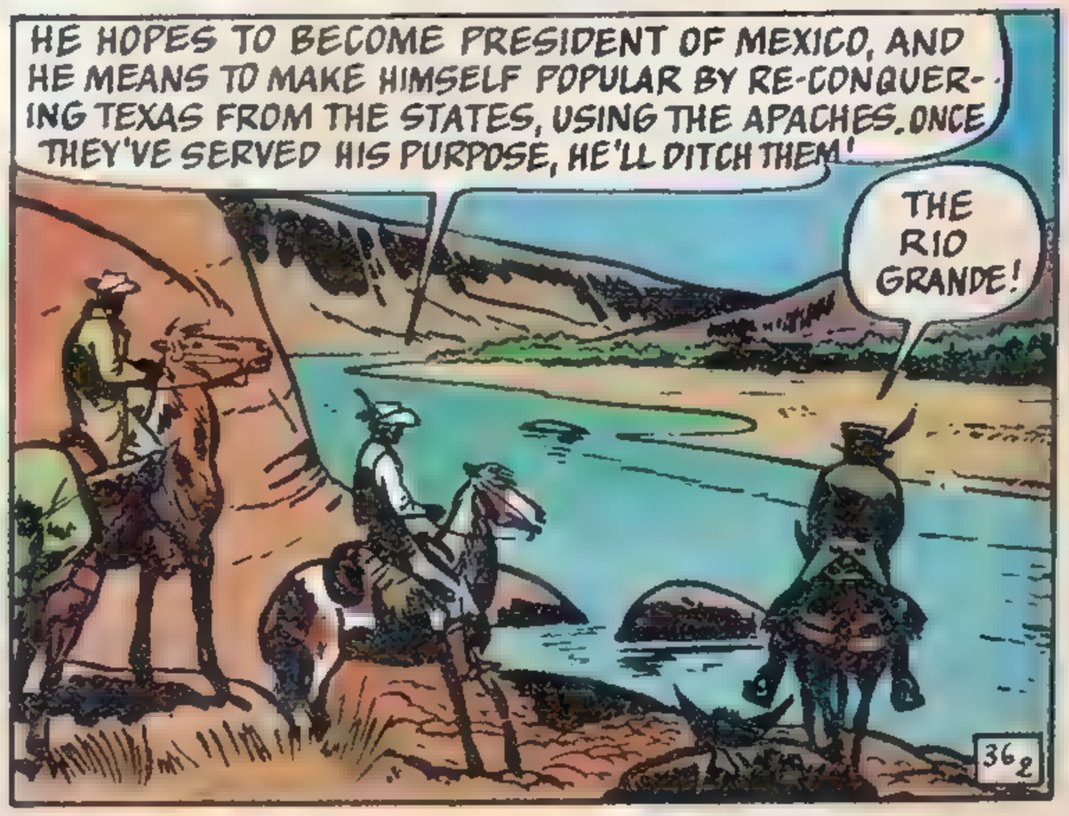
MY GOD, IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU, CROWE! THANKS A LOT! I RECKONED I'D NEVER NEED ANOTHER HAIRCUT!


THERE'S NO TIME TO LOSE...WE MUST LEAVE. YOU'RE NOT SAFE HERE! MANY OF CHARRIBA'S MEN AREN'T HAPPY WITH HIS DECISION...


CROWE TAKES LEAVE OF CHARRIBA, AND SOON...
YOU KNOW WHERE TO FIND COCHISE? THAT'S WHY I CAME TO LOOK FOR YOU. GENERAL CROOK GAVE ME A FORTNIGHT, AND TIME'S RUNNING SHORT!
COCHISE IS IN THE SIERRA MADRE, THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MEXICAN FRONTIER. QUANAH WAS RIGHT: IT'S DANGEROUS...
36 I

THE APACHES HAVE ALLIED THEMSELVES WITH THE MEXICANS, SO ONCE WE CROSS THE BORDER, A FEW MILES OFF, WE'LL HAVE THE MEXES AFTER US TOO. THEY'LL DO ALL THEY CAN TO KEEP US FROM COCHISE...
BUT WE'RE AT PEACE WITH MEXICO!
PEACE! HUH!


AT PEACE WITH THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT, YES! BUT MEXICO CITY IS FAR AWAY, AND PEDRO LUIZ ARMENDARIZ, GOVERNOR OF THE SONORA, HATES US! HE'S PROVIDING THE APACHES WITH GUNS AND HORSES.


HE HOPES TO BECOME PRESIDENT OF MEXICO, AND HE MEANS TO MAKE HIMSELF POPULAR BY RE-CONQUERING TEXAS FROM THE STATES, USING THE APACHES. ONCE THEY'VE SERVED HIS PURPOSE, HE'LL DITCH THEM!
THE RIO GRANDE!
36 2

MEXICO LIES ON THE OTHER SIDE! WE MUST WATCH OUT FOR ARMENDARIZ AND HIS MEN... QUANAH WILL HAVE WARNED THEM, FOR SURE!

IF THEY GET THEIR HANDS ON YOU, SON, AND FIND YOU'RE A U.S. OFFICER, THEY'LL SHOOT YOU FOR A SPY!

WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT!

THE FOOTHILLS OF THE SIERRA MADRE ARE THREE DAYS' RIDE AWAY... IT'S ALL DESERT TILL WE GET THERE!

HELL!

I KNOW THAT DESERT, TOO! HEAT AND DUST... AND YOU CAN SPOT A RIDER MILES AWAY!

MAYBE WE SHOULD AVOID THE DIRECT TRAIL...

BUT WE MUST HURRY! ONCE COCHISE HAS THE ARMS HE NEEDS, HE'LL START OUT...

HIS PLAN IS SIMPLE: SMALL APACHE WARBANDS, LIKE TANA'S AND CHARRIBA'S MEN, WILL KEEP HARRASSING ARIZONA, TO OCCUPY OUR ARMY THERE...

...WHILE COCHISE AND HIS MAIN FORCE, WITH MODERN WEAPONS FROM MEXICO, FALL ON TEXAS, ISOLATING CROOK AND CUTTING HIM OFF FROM HIS REARGUARD AND SUPPLIES.

HMM... GOOD STRATEGY! COULD BE DISASTROUS FOR US! YOU'RE RIGHT... WE MUST REACH COCHISE BEFORE HE SETS OUT!

NEXT DAY...

THAT'S ODD... QUANAH SHOULD'VE WARNED ARMENDARIZ BY NOW, BUT THERE'S NO SIGN OF DANGER!

MAYBE NOT HERE!

BUT OUR MOUNTS ARE THIRSTY. THE ONLY WATERING PLACE AROUND HERE IS THAT PUEBLO, SALINAS. A SILVER-MINING VILLAGE. ARMENDARIZ WILL BE KEEPING WATCH ON THE WELL TO GET US.

AND WE HAVE TO GO THERE!

HEY, I GOT AN IDEA! I DON'T RISK MUCH, AND I'M THE LEAST USE AROUND HERE! I GO AND WATER THE HORSES WHILE YOU TWO STAY HERE. I'LL BRING BACK SOME WATER!

NOT A BAD IDEA...
WHAT IF THEY CATCH YOU, JIMMY?
I'LL SAY I WOULDN'T GO NO FARTHER WITH YOU, AFTER GETTING TO KNOW CHARRIBA!

SEE, SON? AN OLD FELLER LIKE ME, HE DON'T LOOK DANGEROUS! ARMENDARIZ WON'T HARM ME... SPECIALLY IF I SAY I'M THROUGH WITH YOU!
HE'S RIGHT. OKAY, JIMMY, YOU GO! IF YOU GET IN TROUBLE, SEND THE MEXES OFF ON A FALSE TRAIail!
PUT SADDLEBAGS ON THE BEASTS... SADDLES LOOK SUSPICIOUS!

SOON...
GOOD LUCK!

LATER...
ALL WELL... NO SIGN OF SOLDIERS!

BUENAS TARDES, AMIGOS! MUCHO CALOR, EH? NO TROUBLE WITH APACHES HERE? I HEARD THE SIERRA MADRE WAS FULL OF 'EM! AIN'T DON ARMENDARIZ SENT SOLDIERS TO PROTECT YOU?
NO SEÑOR. NO AQUI*... NOT ONE!

AND WE COULD USE SOME! BUT AGAINST GRINGOS... NOT APACHES. AFTER THEIR CIVIL WAR, SOME OF THE SOUTHERN AMERICANOS FLED HERE...THEY ACT LIKE BANDITS!
HUH! THAT'S NOT ...HEY! LOOK AT THAT!
ALMAC

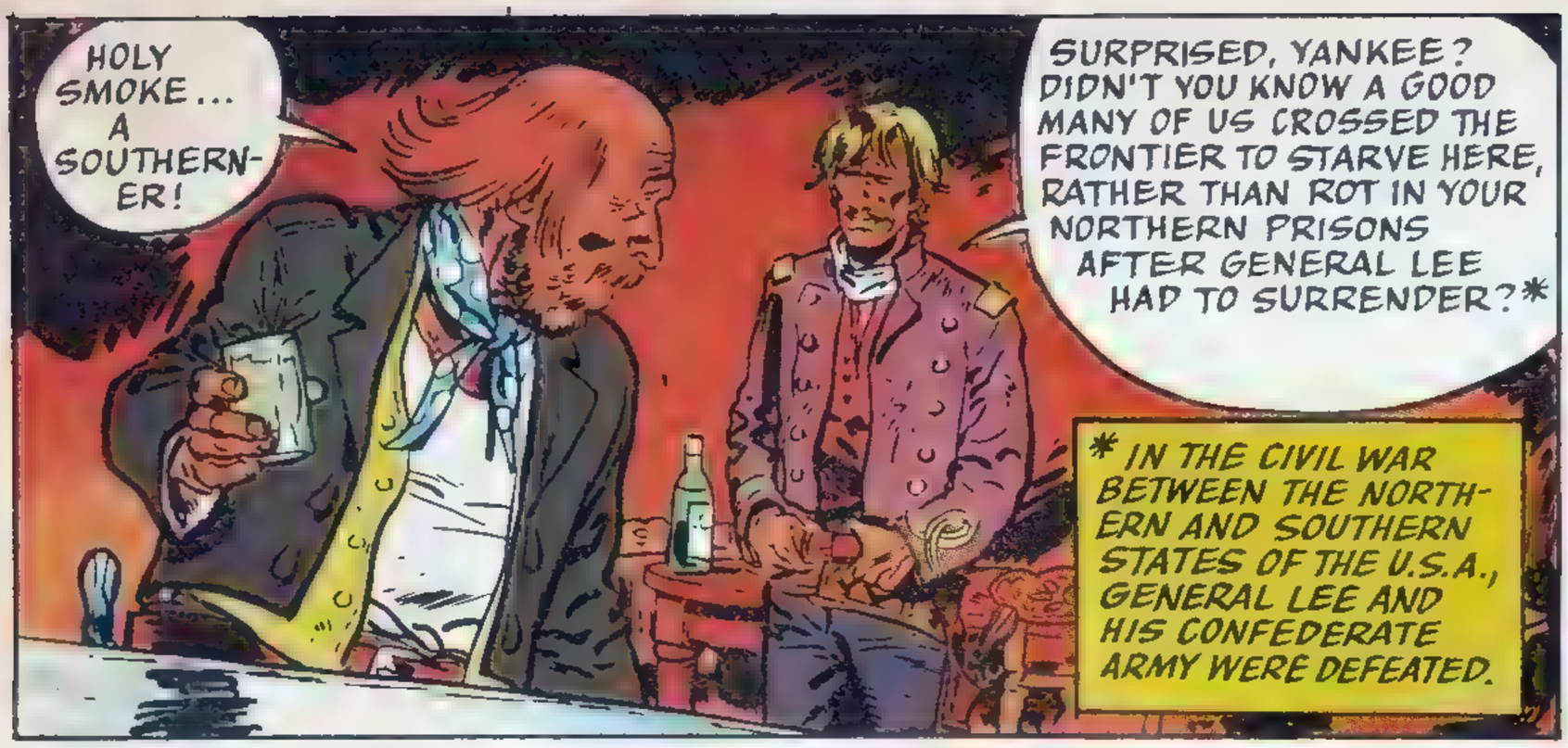
* NOT HERE

A SALOON... HERE! OH BOY!
PULQUERIA
WISKY
COÑAC
TEQUILA

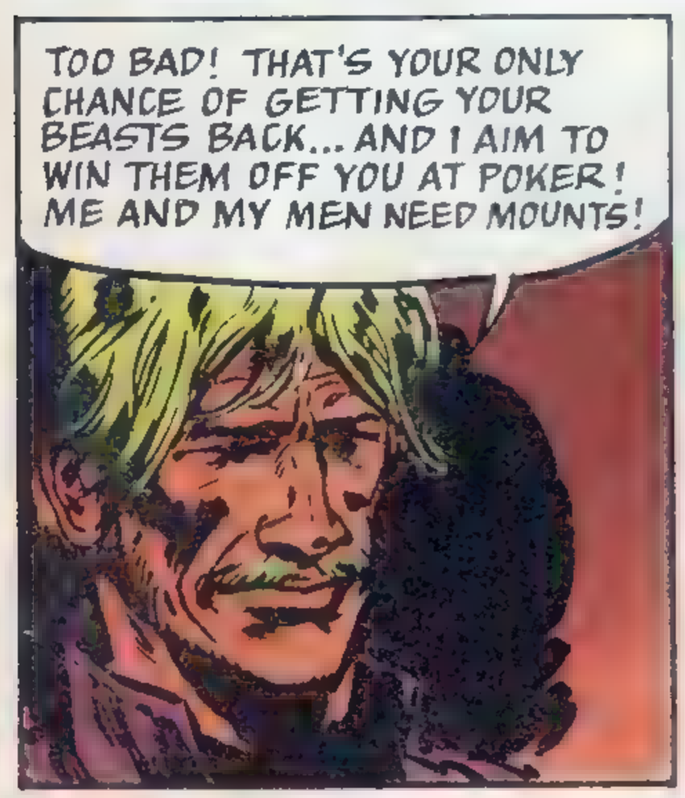
JUST AS I WAS FILLING UP WITH WATER! I CAN GET THE TASTE OUT OF MY MOUTH... HO! HO!

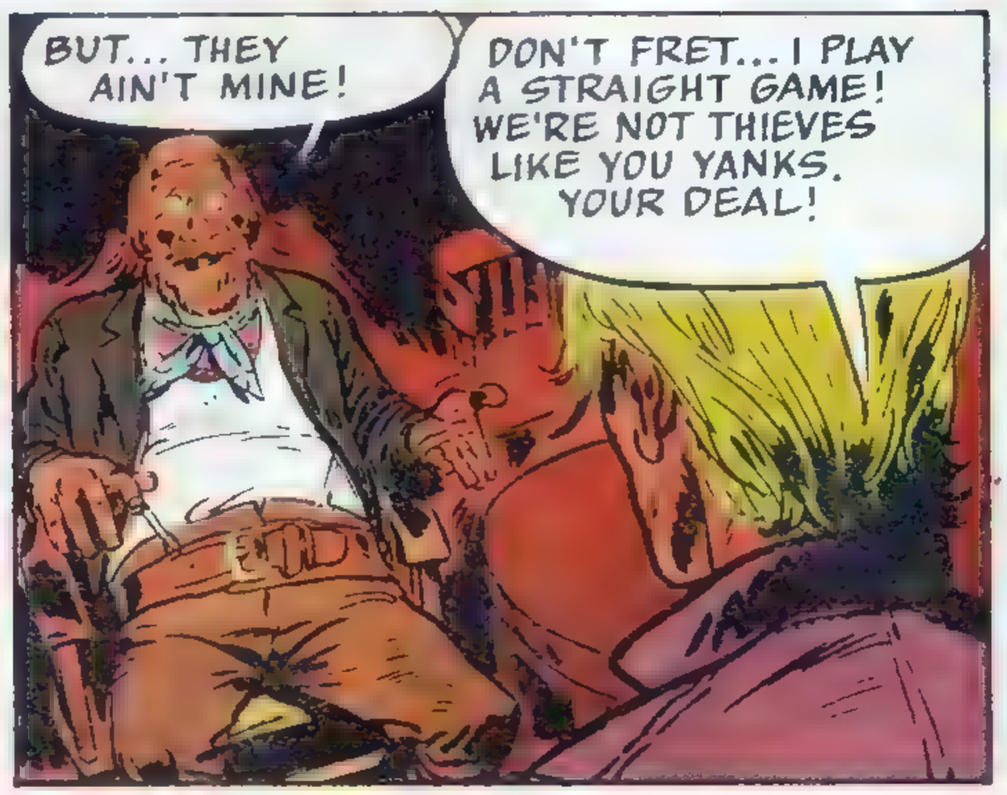
I'M A LOUSE...THINK OF MY FRIENDS, DYING OF THIRST! STILL... JUST A LITTLE DRINK... MAYBE NOT THAT LITTLE...AND MAYBE I CAN GET NEWS...

HERE'S TO GOVERNOR ARMENDARIZ! HERE'S TO GENERAL CROOK!
THAT'S THE LAST TIME YOU DRINK HIS HEALTH!

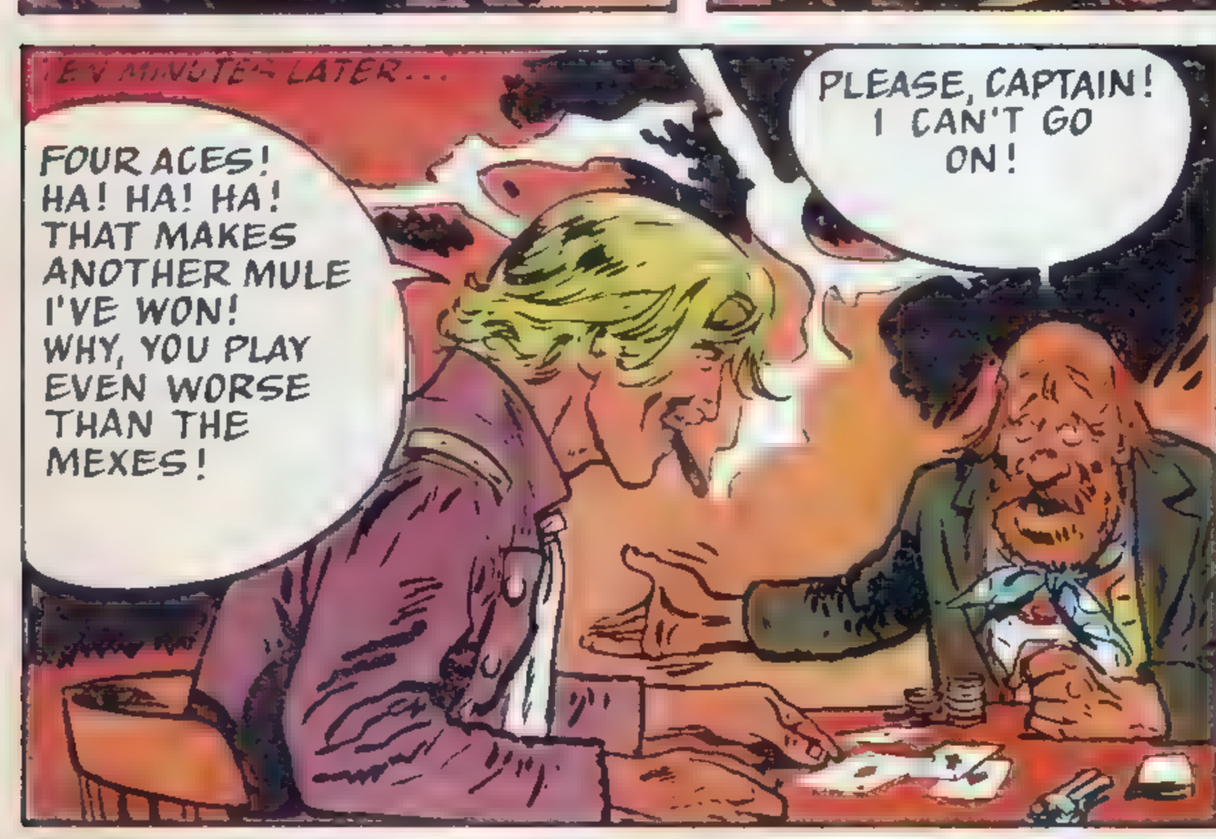

HOLY SMOKE... A SOUTHERNER!
SURPRISED, YANKEE? DIDN'T YOU KNOW A GOOD MANY OF US CROSSED THE FRONTIER TO STARVE HERE, RATHER THAN ROT IN YOUR NORTHERN PRISONS AFTER GENERAL LEE HAD TO SURRENDER?*
* IN THE CIVIL WAR BETWEEN THE NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN STATES OF THE U.S.A., GENERAL LEE AND HIS CONFEDERATE ARMY WERE DEFEATED.

I'M CAPTAIN FINLAY. COULD BE I'M ABOUT TO KILL YOU, YOU DIRTY YANK!
BUT I... I'M NOT PICKING ANY FIGHT!

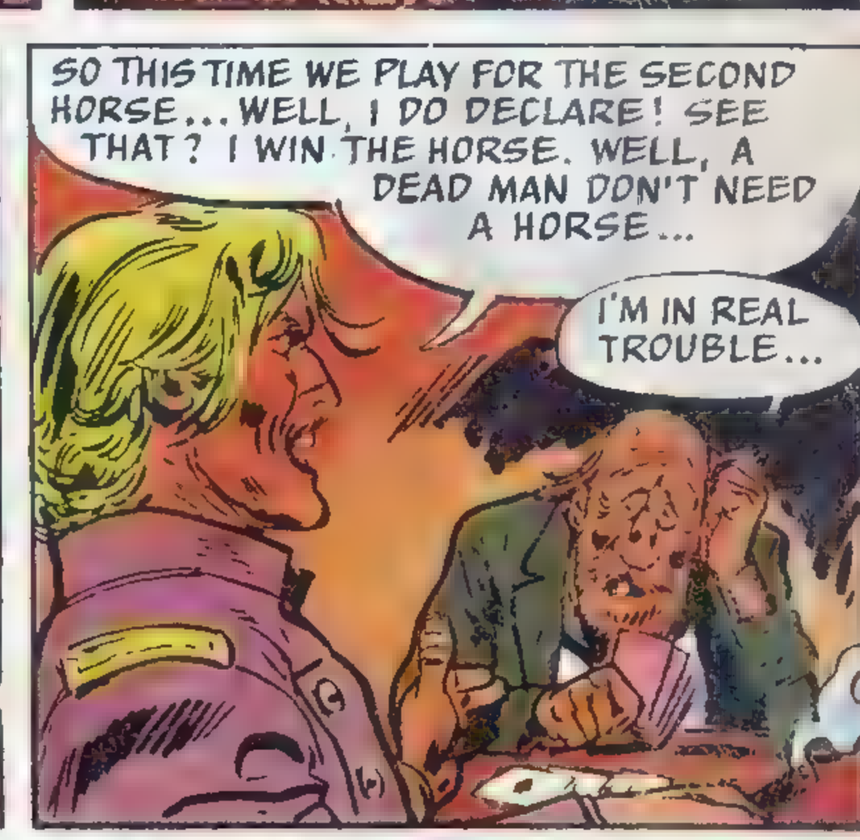

TOO BAD! THAT'S YOUR ONLY CHANCE OF GETTING YOUR BEASTS BACK... AND I AIM TO WIN THEM OFF YOU AT POKER! ME AND MY MEN NEED MOUNTS!


BUT... THEY AIN'T MINE!
DON'T FRET... I PLAY A STRAIGHT GAME! WE'RE NOT THIEVES LIKE YOU YANKS. YOUR DEAL!

LUCKY, MEETING UP WITH YOU! I LIKE A GAME OF POKER, BUT THESE MEXES CAN'T PLAY! SHUFFLE THE PACK!
38A


TEN MINUTES LATER...
FOUR ACES! HA! HA! HA! THAT MAKES ANOTHER MULE I'VE WON! WHY, YOU PLAY EVEN WORSE THAN THE MEXES!
PLEASE, CAPTAIN! I CAN'T GO ON!

PITY. I'LL JUST FINISH YOU OFF, THEN!
NO! NO, NO! NO!


SO THIS TIME WE PLAY FOR THE SECOND HORSE... WELL, I DO DECLARE! SEE THAT? I WIN THE HORSE. WELL, A DEAD MAN DON'T NEED A HORSE...
I'M IN REAL TROUBLE...

MEANWHILE...
IT'S AN HOUR SINCE JIMMY LEFT... SOMETHING MUST HAVE HAPPENED!
LET'S GO FIND OUT!

SOON AFTERWARDS...
THE OLD GRINGO? IN THERE.
MIGHT HAVE KNOWN IT!

YOU HAVE JUST ONE MULE LEFT! HA! HA! HA!!! WE'LL PLAY FOR THAT... SEEING IT'S YOUR LAST GAME OF POKER! YOUR DEAL!
?!!?
OHO! A JAYHAWKER! * POOR OLD JIMMY'S BEING PLUCKED!
* SOUTHERN SOLDIER, PART DESERTER, PART BANDIT, LIVING IN MEXICO AFTER THE CIVIL WAR.
38B

YOU IN TROUBLE, JIMMY? SUPPOSE I TAKE OVER? LUCK CAN TURN FAST AT POKER!
BLUEBERRY ... !...
DAMN!
IF I WAS YOU, I'D LET THAT GUN BE, FRIEND!

I'LL TAKE OVER YOUR HAND, JIMMY. I GUESS THE CAPTAIN HERE WON'T OBJECT... IT'S MORE AMUSING, PLAYING ON EQUAL TERMS!

YOU'RE CRAZY! SITTING HERE PLAYING CARDS... WE'LL BE TRAPPED LIKE RATS!
THIS WON'T TAKE LONG, CROWE!

ER...WHAT WERE YOU PLAYING FOR?
YOU HAVE YOUR WORST MULE LEFT... BUT NOT FOR LONG!
THE...THE MOUNTS, SON. I LOST NEARLY ALL OF 'EM!

WE'LL SEE! MY DEAL?
SURE.
BLUEBERRY... FOR GOD'S SAKE! WE'LL WALK IF WE MUST, BUT WE HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE.. THE PLACE STINKS OF TREACHERY!
40A

SURE ENOUGH, AT THAT VERY MOMENT THE OWNER OF THE CANTINA IS AT HIS ATTIC WINDOW...
THE SOLDIERS HAVE SEEN MY SIGNALS!

HALF AN HOUR LATER
THREE KINGS!
NOT QUITE GOOD ENOUGH, CAPTAIN! THREE ACES! I WIN THE SECOND HORSE, BACK! ONLY THREE MULES TO WIN NOW... SHOULDN'T TAKE ABOVE HALF AN HOUR!
HE'S SUICIDAL!
GOOD WORK, BLUEBERRY!

HALF AN HOUR LATER...
THERE...YOU'VE NOTHING LEFT TO LOSE, CAPTAIN, UNLESS YOU WANT TO STAKE YOUR SABER? I ALWAYS FANCIED ONE OF THEM, TO POKE THE FIRE!
WHAT!?

THE EX OFFICER LEAPS UP, DRAWING HIS GUN...
HEY!
DAMN YOU YANKEE... YOU'RE GOING TOO FAR!
WATCH OUT!
40B

JUST AS THE SOUTHERNER IS ABOUT TO FIRE, BLUEBERRY DRAWS WITH AMAZING SPEED...

AAARGH!

BANG

I COULD'VE KILLED YOU, FINLAY... YOU DREW FIRST, AND I RECKON YOU MEANT TO KILL ... BUT I DON'T AIM TO SHED THE BLOOD OF A U.S. OFFICER, EVEN IF I FOUGHT HIM IN THE WAR!

GO TO HELL, YANKEE... I DON'T WANT YOUR GENEROSITY!

SURE, WE'LL BE GOING, CAPTAIN! I'LL GIVE YOU YOUR REVENGE SOME TIME ... AT POKER!

NOT SO FAST, YANK!

HANDS WELL AWAY FROM YOUR GUNS, YANKEES! UNDO THOSE BELTS! FAST!

HELL... SOUTHERNERS!

??!! EH?

HA! HA! GOOD WORK, KIMBALL! HA! HA!

WE GOT WORRIED WHEN YOU DIDN'T COME BACK, CAPTAIN ...THEN WE HEARD FIRING, SO HERE WE ARE!

MY TURN TO BE GENEROUS, YANKEE! I'LL SPARE YOUR LIFE, BUT I KEEP THE GUNS AND THE MOUNTS. MY MEN NEED 'EM! COME ON, LADS!

BUT...

WHAT?

FINLAY, LISTEN... TAKE ANYTHING ELSE, BUT LEAVE US OUR HORSES! IT'S A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH!

NOT SO PROUD NOW?

FOR GOD'S SAKE... I'LL TELL YOU THE WHOLE STORY. I'M ON A SPECIAL MISSION FROM GENERAL CROOK. I HAVE TO REACH COCHISE, FAST, TO STOP WAR BREAKING OUT!

SO?

GOOD! THE MORE DIRTY YANKS GET KILLED BY APACHES, THE LESS OF 'EM IN THE WEST!

CAPTAIN! QUICK... GET MOVING! WE MUST CLEAR OUT!

FINLAY... THE APACHES AND THE MEXICANS ARE AFTER US... WITHOUT HORSES OR GUNS WE'RE DONE FOR!

COYOTES! BLACKGUARDS! YOU'LL HAVE THE DEATH OF INNOCENT WOMEN AND CHILDREN ON YOUR CONSCIENCE! COWARDS!

NOT A HOPE OF FINDING FRESH MOUNTS HERE...

WHAT THE... OH!

WATCH OUT! MEXICAN CAVALRY... DOWN THE OTHER END OF THE PUEBLO!

ARMENDARIZ'S MEN!

42A

PANIC-STRICKEN, BLUEBERRY, CROWE AND MACCLURE TRY TO GET AWAY AMONG THE HOUSES. TOO LATE... WARNED BY THE OWNER OF THE CANTINA, THE GOVERNOR'S MEN HAVE ALREADY OCCUPIED THE TOWN, CUTTING OFF EVERY AVENUE OF ESCAPE.

WE'RE SURROUNDED! WE DON'T EVEN HAVE A KNIFE!

YOU AND YOUR POKER GAMES!

MAKE WAY FOR THE GOBERNADOR! BRING HIM THE PRISONERS!

HOLY SMOKE! LOOK... THERE, BESIDE ARMENDARIZ! IT'S HIM AGAIN!

QUANAH ONE-EYE! WE'RE DONE FOR NOW!

HELL AND DAMNATION!

42B

THAT IS THE BLUECOAT! THE TRAITOR WHO DISGUISES HIMSELF AS A HARMLESS PALEFACE... AND THE OTHER TWO ARE HIS ACCOMPLICES!

CARAMBA! AN AMERICAN OFFICER ON A SECRET MISSION TO MEXICO... NOT IN UNIFORM... ESPIONAGE, EH?

I PROTEST! WE...

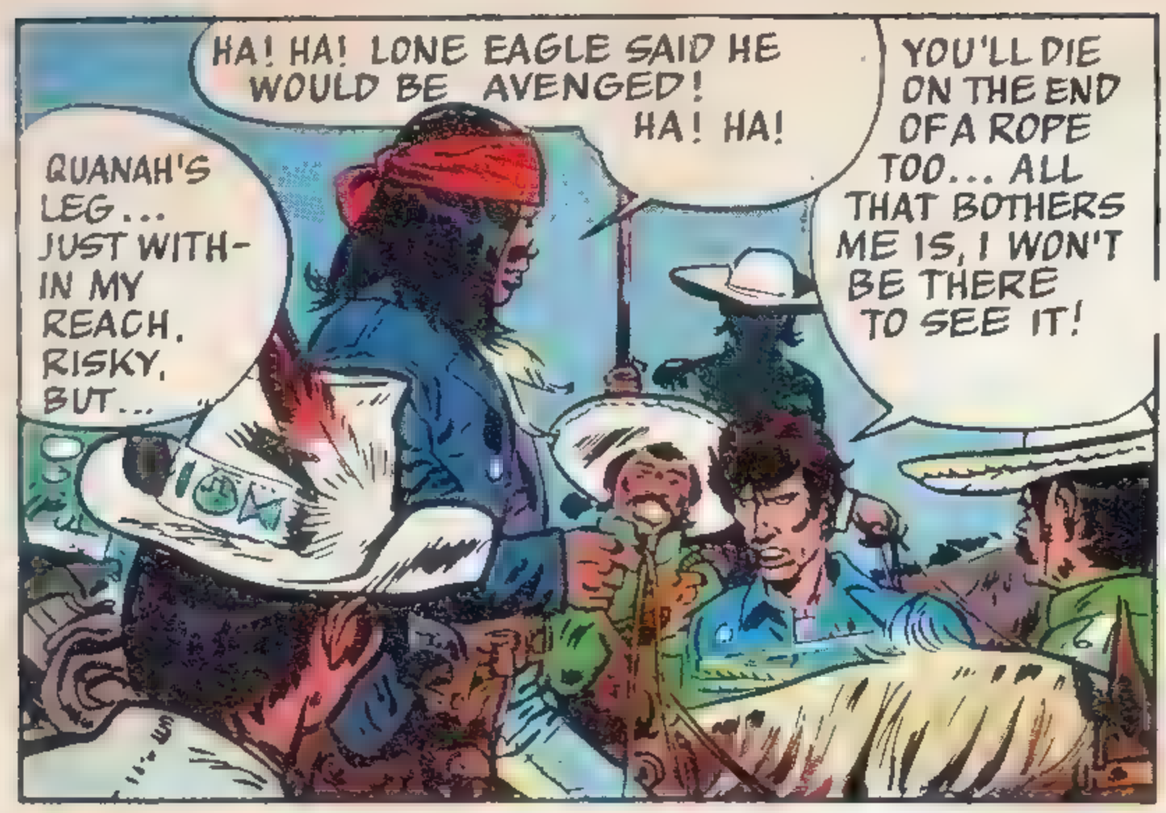
SILENCIO, GRINGO!

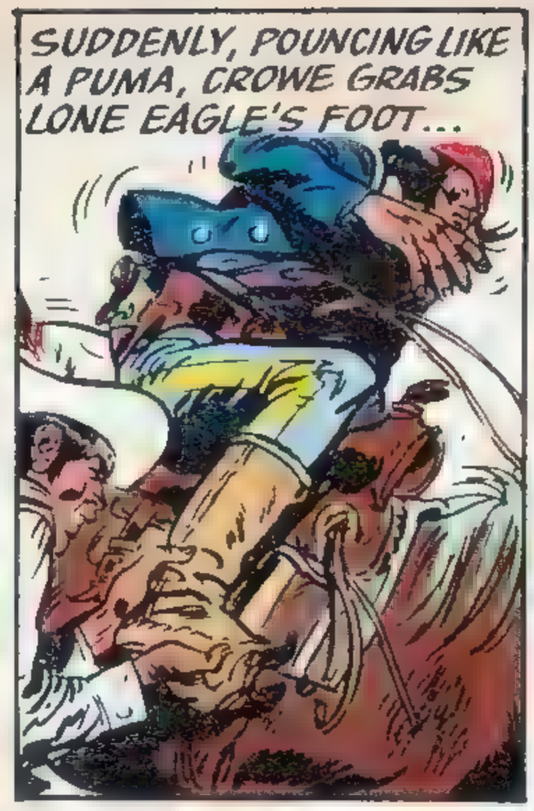
OUCH!

UNDER MARTIAL LAW, I KNOW ONLY ONE PUNISHMENT FOR SPIES...

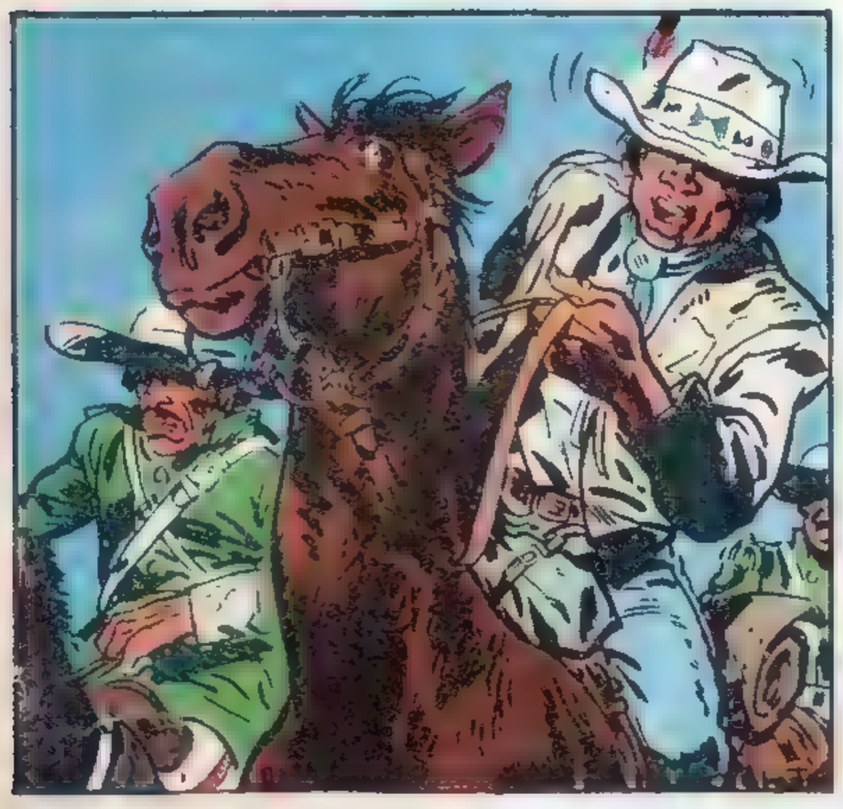
HANG THIS MAN AT ONCE!

42C

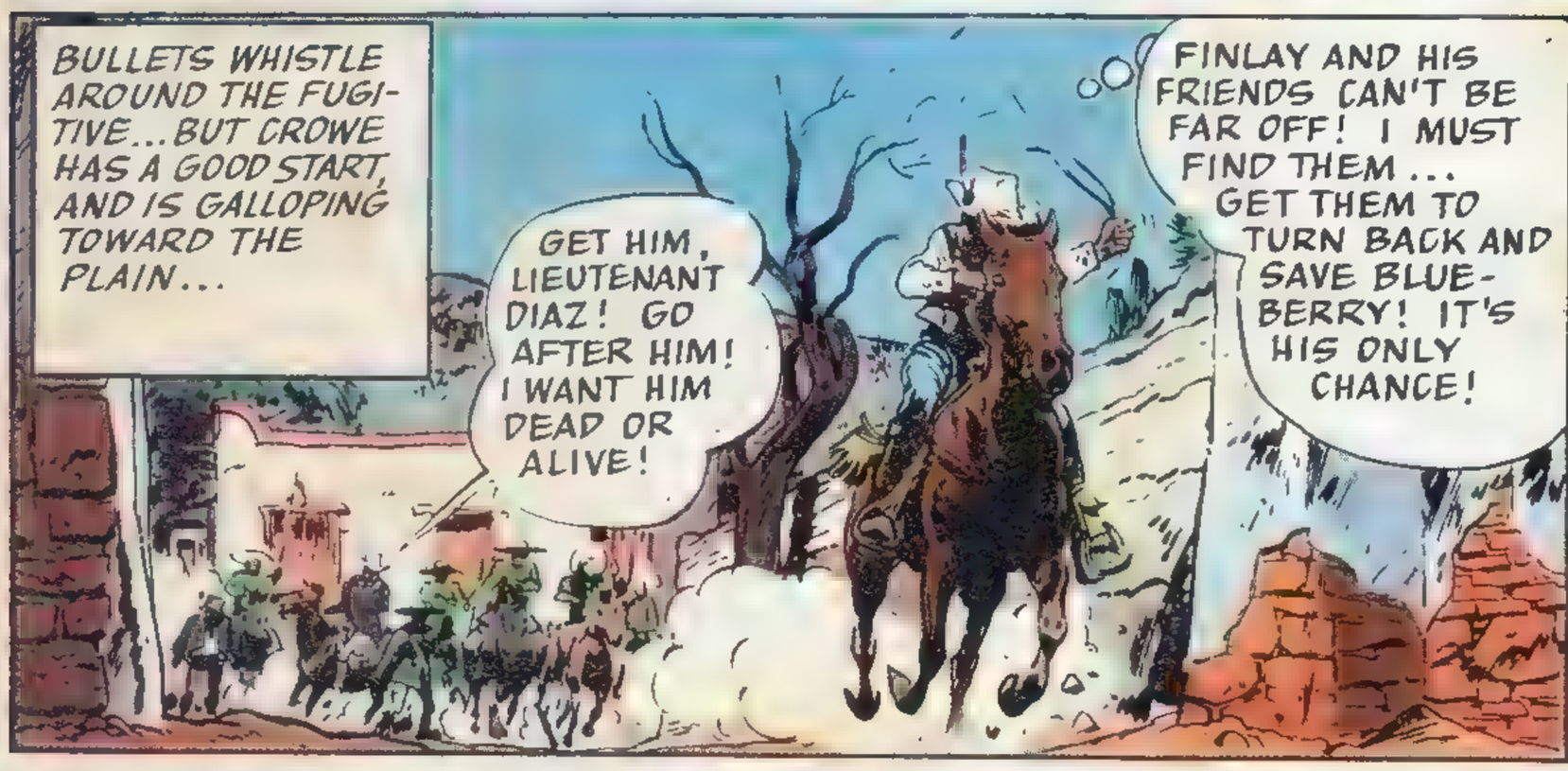

HA! HA! LONE EAGLE SAID HE WOULD BE AVENGED! HA! HA!
QUANAH'S LEG... JUST WITHIN MY REACH. RISKY, BUT...
YOU'LL DIE ON THE END OF A ROPE TOO... ALL THAT BOTHERS ME IS, I WON'T BE THERE TO SEE IT!

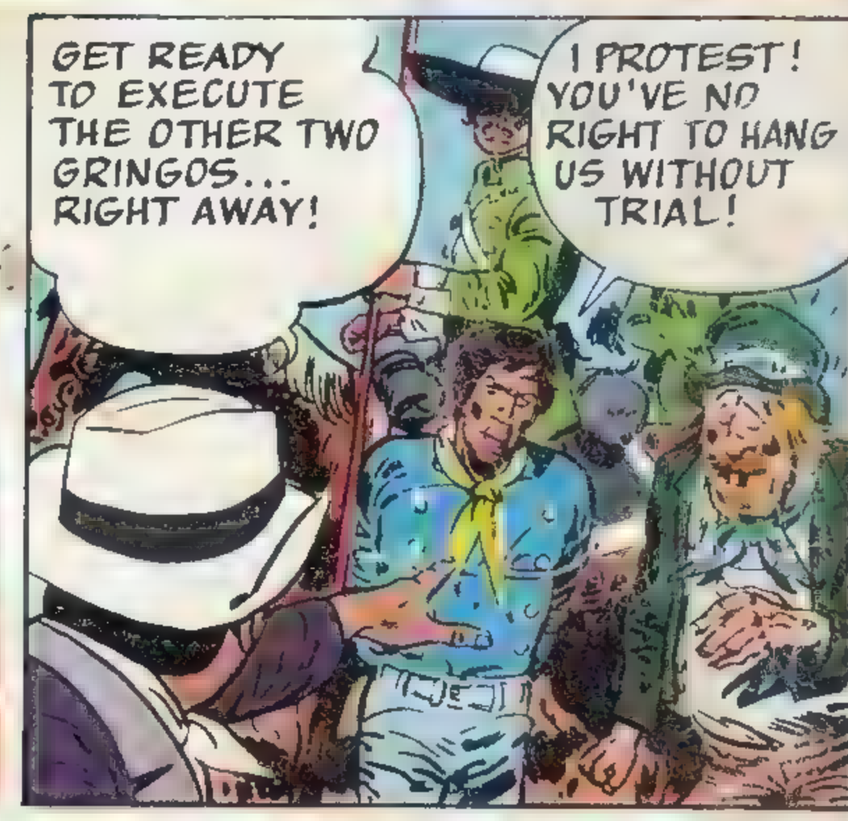

SUDDENLY, POUNCING LIKE A PUMA, CROWE GRABS LONE EAGLE'S FOOT...

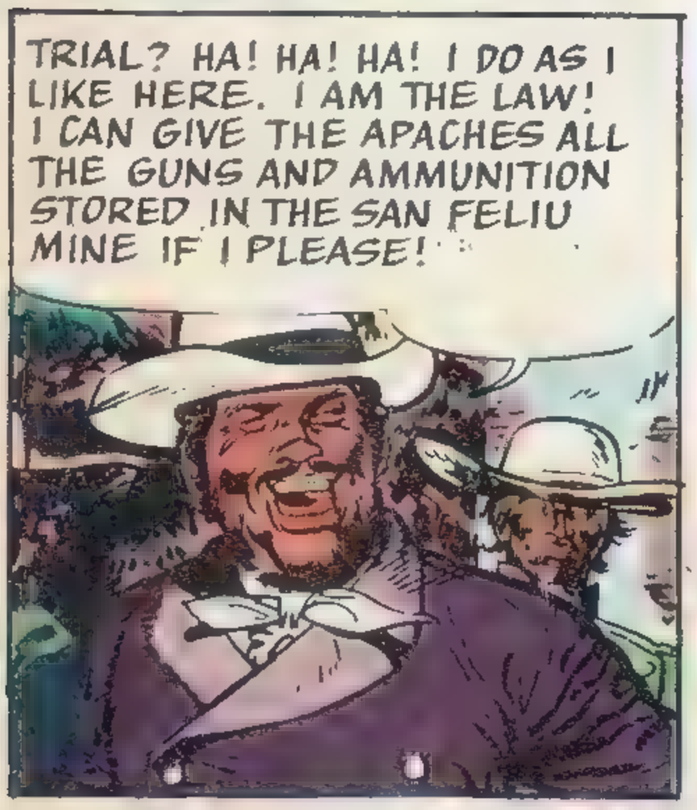
AAAAHH!

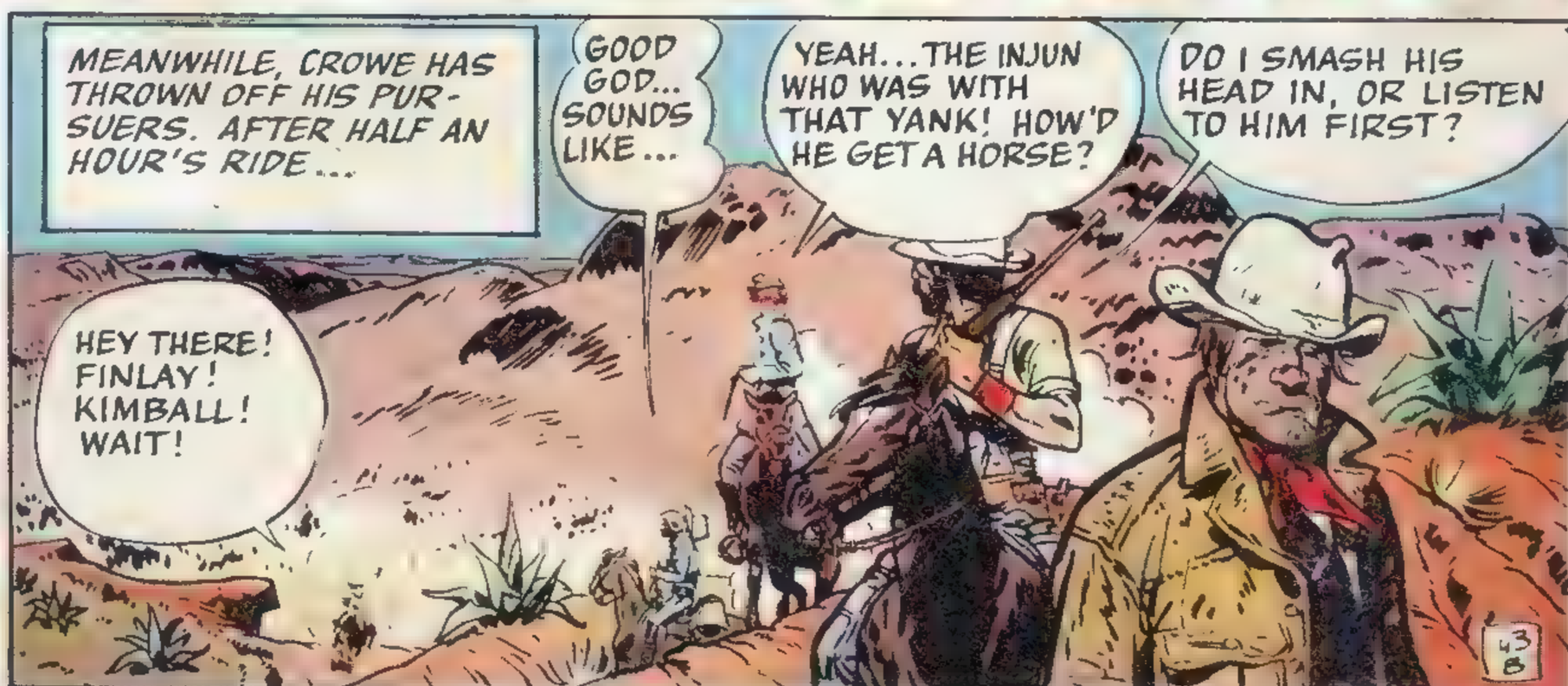


QUICK! STOP HIM!
FIRE! FIRE ON HIM!
POW
GO ON, CROWE!
TAKE THAT!
OUCH!


BULLETS WHISTLE AROUND THE FUGITIVE... BUT CROWE HAS A GOOD START, AND IS GALLOPING TOWARD THE PLAIN...
GET HIM, LIEUTENANT DIAZ! GO AFTER HIM! I WANT HIM DEAD OR ALIVE!
FINLAY AND HIS FRIENDS CAN'T BE FAR OFF! I MUST FIND THEM... GET THEM TO TURN BACK AND SAVE BLUEBERRY! IT'S HIS ONLY CHANCE!


GET READY TO EXECUTE THE OTHER TWO GRINGOS... RIGHT AWAY!
I PROTEST! YOU'VE NO RIGHT TO HANG US WITHOUT TRIAL!


TRIAL? HA! HA! HA! I DO AS I LIKE HERE. I AM THE LAW! I CAN GIVE THE APACHES ALL THE GUNS AND AMMUNITION STORED IN THE SAN FELIU MINE IF I PLEASE!


MEANWHILE, CROWE HAS THROWN OFF HIS PURSUERS. AFTER HALF AN HOUR'S RIDE...
GOOD GOD... SOUNDS LIKE...
YEAH... THE INJUN WHO WAS WITH THAT YANK! HOW'D HE GET A HORSE?
DO I SMASH HIS HEAD IN, OR LISTEN TO HIM FIRST?
HEY THERE! FINLAY! KIMBALL! WAIT!

YOU MUST HELP ME! YOU'RE AMERICAN SOLDIERS TOO! LIEUTENANT BLUEBERRY'S BEEN CAPTURED BY ARMENDARIZ AND HIS MEN...THEY'RE ABOUT TO STRING HIM UP, AND IT'S YOUR DOING!

HANG HIM? THANKS FOR RIDING SO HARD TO LET US KNOW! HA! HA! HA!

ONE DIRTY NORTHERNER LESS! GOOD RIDDANCE!

COWARDS! YOUR HONOR IS AS RAGGED AS YOUR UNIFORMS! MAYBE BLUEBERRY FOUGHT YOU IN THE CIVIL WAR, BUT HE WAS LOYAL TO HIS SIDE!

BLOODY HALF-BREED! I'LL SOON SILENCE YOU!

SURE... ATTACK AN UNARMED MAN! AND YOU DARE INSULT BLUEBERRY...A MAN ABOUT TO LOSE HIS LIFE, TRYING TO SAVE HUNDREDS OF INNOCENT FOLK! HE'S WORTH THE LOT OF YOU!

TOMORROW COCHISE AND HIS WARRIORS GET GUNS FROM ARMENDARIZ ... AND THEY ATTACK TEXAS. **YOUR** STATE, FINLAY! I KNOW YOU'RE A TEXAN BY YOUR ACCENT!

WE'RE ALL TEXANS.

YOU KNOW ABOUT BLUEBERRY'S MISSION? THERE WAS A GOOD CHANCE HE MIGHT GET COCHISE TO SIGN A PEACE TREATY. IF YOU REFUSE TO HELP HIM, YOU'RE PRACTICALLY PUTTING THOSE GUNS INTO INDIAN HANDS!

AND THAT'LL AVENGE BLUEBERRY...IT WON'T BE NORTHERNERS WHO PAY FOR YOUR COWARDICE, IT'LL BE TEXAN WOMEN AND CHILDREN! THE FOLK YOU FOUGHT FOR IN THE CIVIL WAR.*

WHAT?

*TEXAS WAS ON THE SOUTHERN SIDE

YOU MAY WELL HAVE PUT TEXAS INTO MEXICAN HANDS...AS ARMENDARIZ HOPES! SO MUCH FOR THE MEN WHO DIED ON THE ALAMO! I'M GOING BACK TO MY FRIENDS!

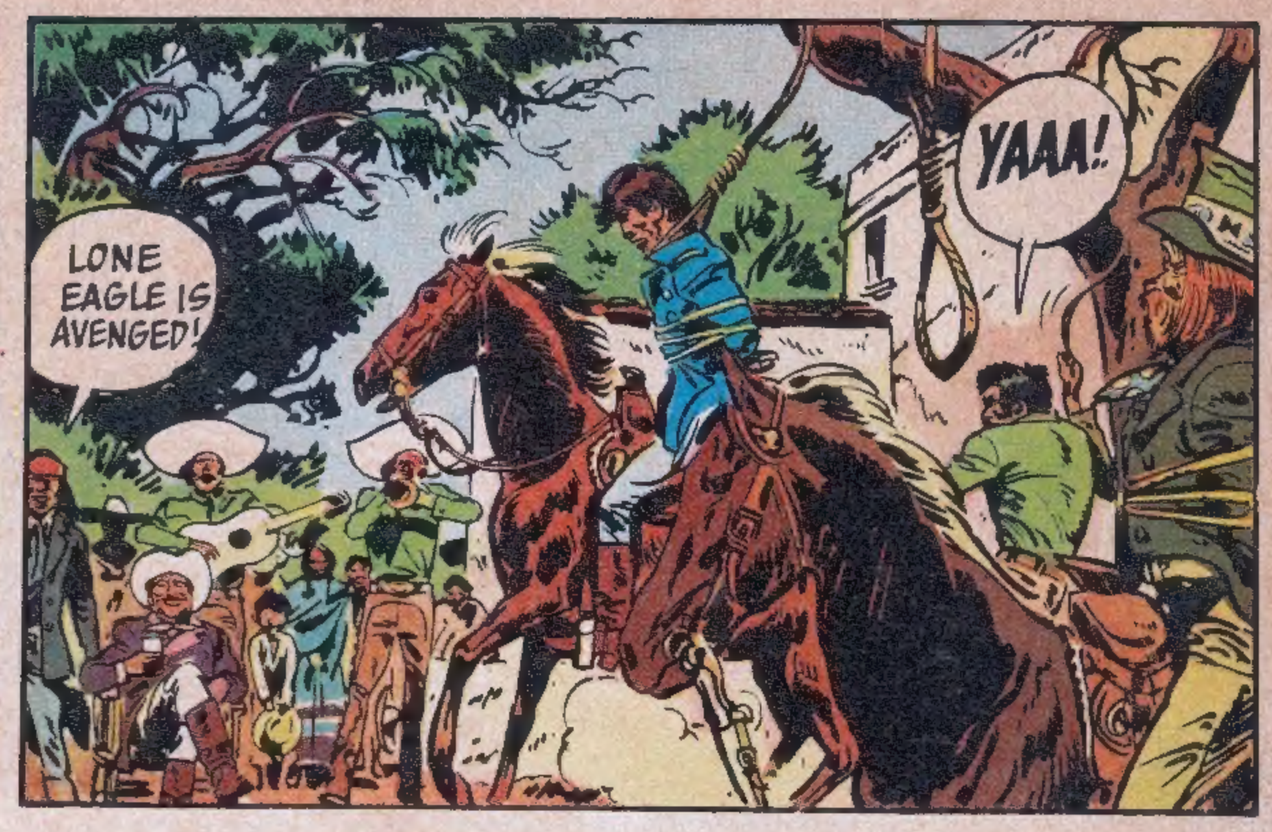
MEANWHILE, IN SALINAS...

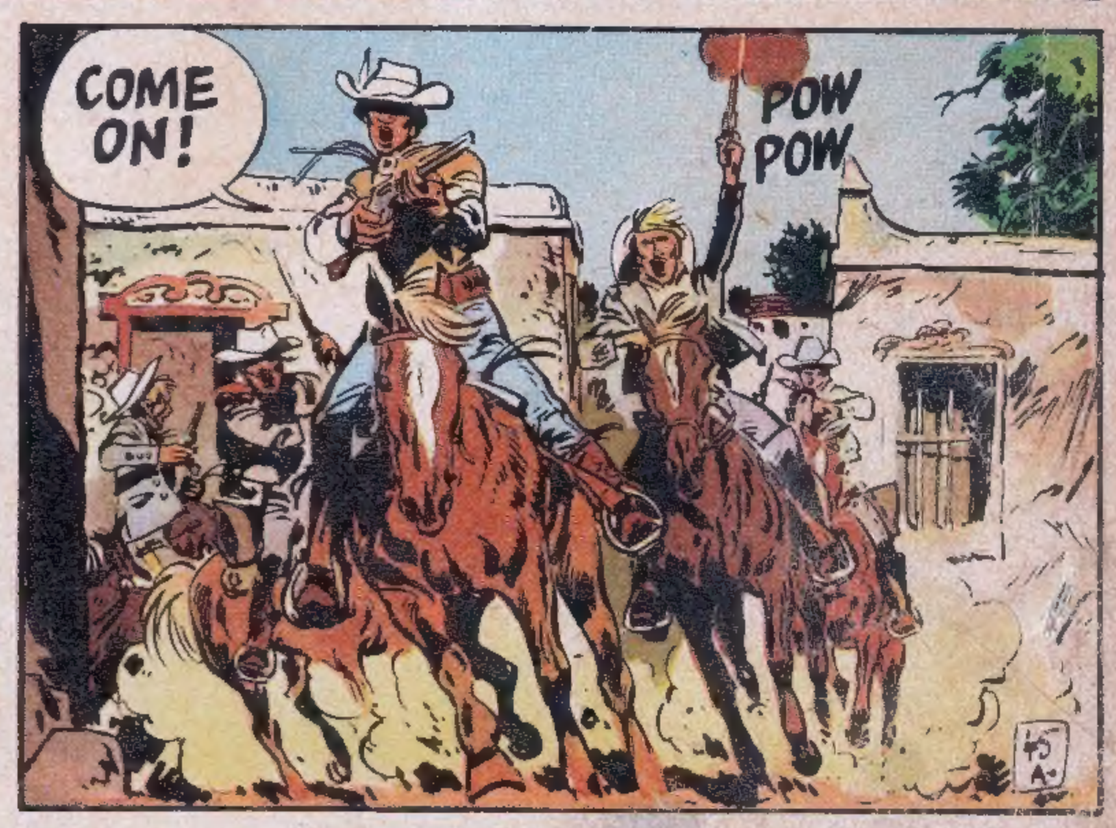
HA! HA! THAT YANKEE'S FANCY TO DIE IN UNIFORM LOST SOME TIME, BUT I NEVER HAD THE PLEASURE OF HANGING A YANKEE LIEUTENANT BEFORE!

READY, YOUR EXCELLENCY!

GOODBYE, JIMMY. SORRY I DRAGGED YOU INTO THIS! I'LL NEVER PLAY POKER AGAIN... I GUESS THAT WON'T BE DIFFICULT!

IT'S ALL MY FAULT, SON! IF ONLY I'D KEPT OUT OF THAT SALOON!





WHILE A HAIL OF BULLETS CLEARS THE AREA AROUND THE TREE, CROWE AND THE JAYHAWKERS DASH ACROSS THE SQUARE, SPREADING PANIC... HAMPERED BY ONLOOKERS, THE MEXICANS SCATTER IN CONFUSION...

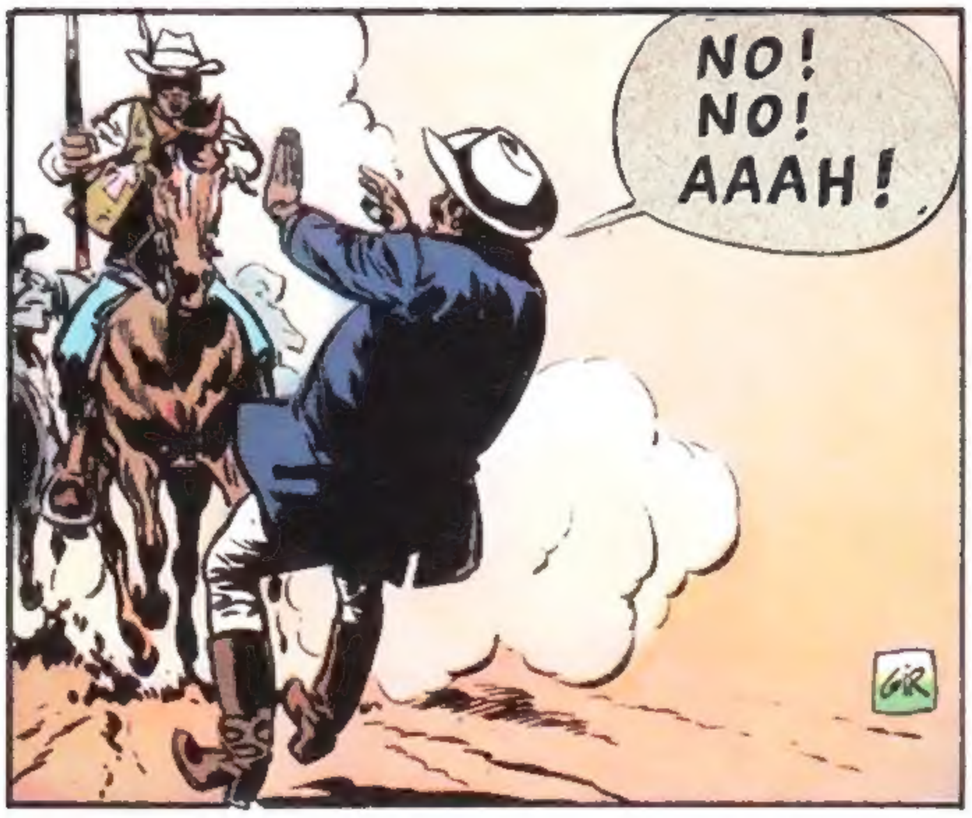
WHAT... WHO THE...?

COME ON, JIMMY!

HELP!

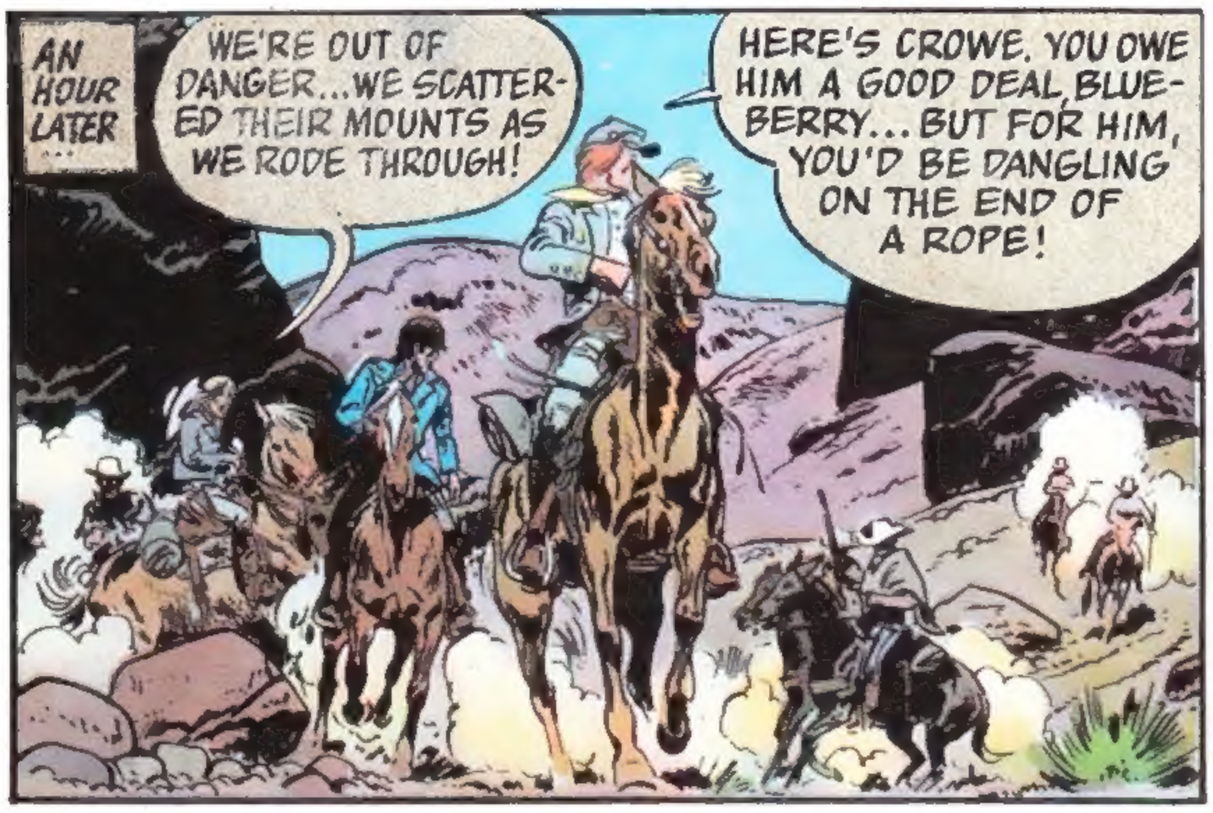
THE GRINGOS ARE ATTACKING!

TIENDA DE ABARROTES

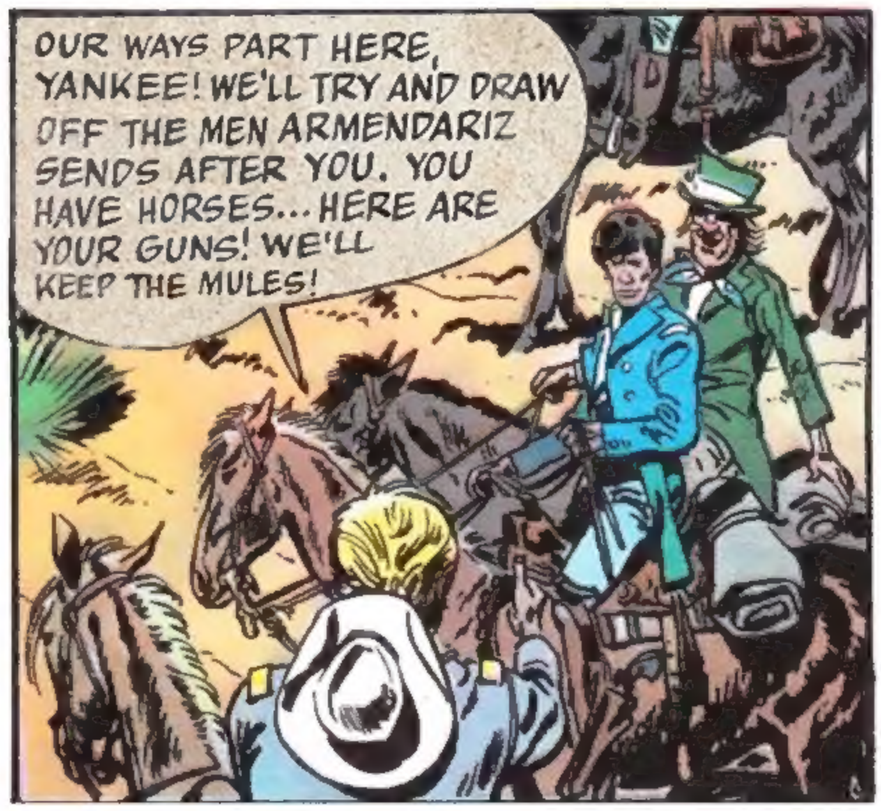

NO! NO! AAAH!

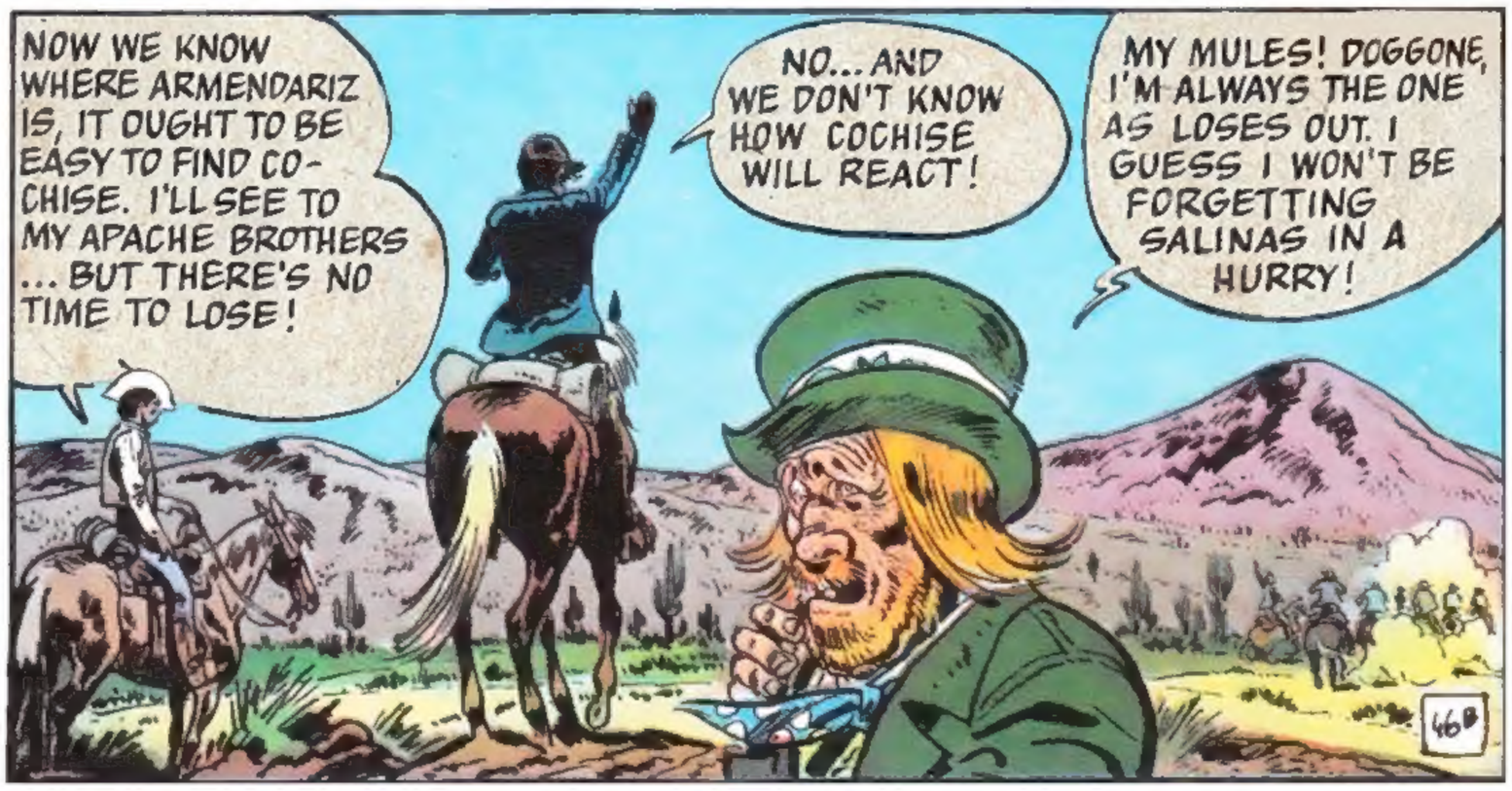
FINLAY! KIMBALL! WHAT...?
SURPRISED, EH, YANKEE? BETTER THANK YOUR FRIEND CROWE ...WE RECKONED WE COULDN'T LET THE MEXES HANG A U.S. OFFICER ...EVEN A NORTHERNER!

I'LL NEVER FORGET THIS, FINLAY! I'LL SEE YOU GET AN AMNESTY!
THAT'S OKAY, YANKEE. WE DID IT FOR TEXAS, NOT YOU.


AN HOUR LATER...
WE'RE OUT OF DANGER...WE SCATTERED THEIR MOUNTS AS WE RODE THROUGH!
HERE'S CROWE. YOU OWE HIM A GOOD DEAL, BLUEBERRY... BUT FOR HIM, YOU'D BE DANGLING ON THE END OF A ROPE!

CROWE, YOU SAVED MY LIFE AGAIN! I DON'T KNOW HOW TO...
KEEP THAT FOR LATER! WE MUST GET MOVING!


OUR WAYS PART HERE, YANKEE! WE'LL TRY AND DRAW OFF THE MEN ARMENDARIZ SENDS AFTER YOU. YOU HAVE HORSES... HERE ARE YOUR GUNS! WE'LL KEEP THE MULES!


NOW WE KNOW WHERE ARMENDARIZ IS, IT OUGHT TO BE EASY TO FIND COCHISE. I'LL SEE TO MY APACHE BROTHERS ...BUT THERE'S NO TIME TO LOSE!
NO... AND WE DON'T KNOW HOW COCHISE WILL REACT!
MY MULES! DOGGONE, I'M ALWAYS THE ONE AS LOSES OUT. I GUESS I WON'T BE FORGETTING SALINAS IN A HURRY!

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